First and foremost:

The first JUST BE JERSEY story of the weekend comes to us from Mr. Jason Brunaugh...

I was on my way home from a soccer game this morning when I noticed a lady’s car had stalled and she was trying to push it off the road near the First Presbyterian Church. As I pulled over and began to help her push the vehicle, Brendan "Whitey" Kennedy pulled over, jumped out and helped to push the car safely off the road. He also retrieved jumper cables from his vehicle and helped her start her car. I remember coaching Whitey when he was in 6th grade. He was a great kid and so easy to coach. He was a hard worker and also a great student in the classroom. Mr. Kennedy is a junior this year and has grown into a fine young man. He modeled those "Just Be Jersey" qualities and I was very proud he did the right thing.

So if you see Brendan “Whitey” Kennedy, please thank him for Just Being Jersey. Also, thank YOU, Mr. Brunaugh, for taking time out to Just Be Jersey, too! 😊

I met two Jersey Panther Football fans at a game. They both exemplified the Just Be Jersey way. I’m very proud to communicate the story:

The little girl accidentally kicked the woman’s soda when she was approaching the fence to check out the band. A big gaping hole was the result, and the contents of the cup spilled to the ground. The little girl was devastated. One could tell by the look on her face. She immediately apologized, apologized, and apologized some more. The woman was so gracious, assuring the little girl three times over that it was an accident and was no big deal. I watched this scenario play out. The little girl was still not satisfied with her apology, and again looked at the woman with the saddest eyes and apologized again. The woman smiled and reassured the little girl. “Really…it’s okay! It’s just a soda!” Of course, I had to get a picture of the two of them. This is kindness at its best and behavior I enjoyed watching from up close and personal! Both illustrated that JUST BEING JERSEY is alive and well in Jersey!

I would like to introduce you to Mr. Bollinger! I met him at a local gas station. He caught my eye because he pulled up in his truck along with a trailer hauling a golf cart. He pulled into the
pumps perfectly so he could fill up his truck and cart at the same time. That was until I pulled in. I didn’t even realize his strategy until I parked and began to fill up, which is when he moved his truck to the other side of the pump. I began talking with him and then it hit me. I felt horrible and apologized to him. I admitted that I didn’t realize his intent. He was very polite, stating it was not a problem. We began talking, and I believe I said something about the golf cart. That’s when he explained that the golf cart was not his but was filling it up to use at a benefit occurring in Grafton for a woman who was diagnosed with cancer. He stated, “It’s the least I can do.” It’s amazing to me how many people I meet in Jersey who are committed to helping others out. While I had never met Mr. Bollinger, I do know his daughter, Alexis. I appreciated the conversation and was happy to have met this man who was illustrating the Just Be Jersey way by his kind manner and caring nature.

Most of you know these three ladies: Mrs. Duggan, Mrs. Kirbach, and Mrs. Cummings. They help spread the JUST BE JERSEY way at its most important stage – Birth to Three! Helping our little ones understand the importance of good character is crucial. These three ladies came together, asking the right questions about raising character awareness and starting with the very little ones. Thank you, Ladies, for not only promoting the JUST BE JERSEY way, but for modeling it as well. Thank you for JUST BEING JERSEY!

This young lady is a waitress at Applebee’s and she served my husband, girls, and me in Alton, Illinois on Friday. She was very kind and provided excellent customer service. What makes this young lady special is what she said to me after I explained that I worked for a school district and was really committed to “selling” the idea of JUST BEING JERSEY. I explained it fully and told her that she exemplified the attributes one would see in a young lady of wonderful character. She was sweet, mannerly, and very friendly. She admitted that she didn’t always make the best decisions, and because of those decisions she is working three jobs and taking online classes. She is also raising a child which makes life difficult. But she smiled cordially and immediately came back with, “But it’s alright because one of these days it will pay off.” She maintained a very kind disposition. I was very impressed with her. Again, I asked this kind stranger if I could take her picture. She asked – “Are you going to share it with anyone.” Of course I replied, “Well, yes! I’m going to share it with several.” With that, I had to take a
few shots to make sure the pic was a good one! 😊 After receiving my bill I did not find the closing sentiment a surprise. It’s exactly as I expected. If you see Ashley, please thank her for JUST BEING JERSEY! 😊

---

Already shared with the Jersey staff - JUST BE JERSEY stories... 😊

And I have a JUST BE JERSEY story to go along with it brought to you by Mrs. Herkert!

I am sure you know, but in case you don’t, the varsity soccer team won their conference last night and it was awesome watching the boys and coaches come into the parking lot on the bus with their police escort all pumped and proud. As we were leaving, the seniors were all still there huddled and as we pulled away I heard them yell ....123...seniors!

From a parent perspective, these students are such an awesome group of boys and they have been excellent role models for the incoming Freshman boys, treating them with respect and friendship on and off the field. I credit much of that to Coach Burney, Coach Woelfel and Coach Witt, but also to the boys and their parents that taught them how important it is to be a leader and to care about others! All of the soccer organization represents Jersey well and it is so awesome to watch them succeed game after game!! Just wanted to share!

Thank you, Mrs. Herkert! And congratulations to the boys, the coaches, the families, and the Jersey 100 community for building winners and leaders-- AND Just Being Jersey! J

---

I would like to share a JUST BE JERSEY story brought to me by Mr. Matt East.

Ms. Patti Hutchinson is a die-hard Cubs fan, but... donned her husband’s Cardinal jersey for all the kids at Grafton Elementary.

Mr. East said he never thought he would see this day!

Now this is certainly JUST BEING JERSEY – modeling what it means to be a TEAM player!! J

Way to go, Ms. Hutchinson!
Thank you for sharing, Mr. East!
Go Cardinals!
And GOOOO Panthers!
And on a same note, if you want a little pick-me-up to this fabulous Friday, watch this video: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=m1MY7KURim0

Make today SPECTACULAR!!

I have a story to tell. Not sure if it’s a JUST BE JERSEY story, but it’s a good one...

I spoke with someone this evening who opened a conversation with me. Never saw this person in my life! J He told me he had called his second grade teacher last week. I was intrigued. For what reason, may I ask?
He said, “I’m glad you asked because I want to tell you this story because I think you’ll appreciate it.”

He continued...

“I called my second grade teacher because I thought she should know how I feel about her. She inspired me to be all I can be. She made me feel so good about myself every single day, and did this without even knowing it. She spoke in a nice manner, gave hugs to all of her students (sometimes to the point of embarrassment), and sang to us – all the time!”
Of course the latter comment made me really smile.
I will not forget his words.
He concluded with –“ I just wanted her to know how I felt so I called her to tell her.”

I was blown away really. When I asked his name, he stuck his hand out to introduce himself formally: “Hi, I’m Jason and I am who I am in part because of my second grade teacher; although, my parents did a good job, too!”

I laughed, and of course I was very confused, wondering why he was telling me this. He admitted – “I overheard someone say you were a superintendent and I thought you would like to know the effect my teachers had on my life. I am successful, and I owe a lot of my success to my teachers – especially my second grade teacher, Mrs. Wendle (spell?).

I’m not sure where he went to school because – unfortunately – the conversation ended when he received a call and had to go. I didn’t get his picture either, but I did get his message, and it’s a good one.
If you know Mrs. Wendle, thank her for making a difference. J

I’m just sharing the good news...J Teachers impact lives – just in case you haven’t heard that from me before.

Thanks for making a difference. Yep- I think he was JUST BEING JERSEY!
Another **Just Be Jersey** story brought to you by Jersey Community High School and shared by Mrs. Gwen Brunaugh...

**Five hundred forty-four dollars and forty-two cents** were raised for Isaac's Rays of Hope during Homecoming Week as part of the high school’s spirit competition. Super proud of all of our kids!

A wonderful contribution to an organization that “creates brighter days for kids with cancer.”

Way to **JUST BE JERSEY** for sharing, Mrs. Brunaugh, and for giving, JCHS!

Mrs. Wackerly shared a wonderful **Just Be Jersey** moment that occurred at East Elementary today. This shows that we are teaching kids more than good character. We are teaching them how to be moral, principled and very respectful citizens. I’m so very proud!

*Mr. Flowers had Mrs. Fry's PE class outside today for some serious flag football. Before it was time to line up, a funeral procession came by the playground. These respectful 3rd graders stood silently and faced the funeral procession as it drove by the playground. It is so touching for a family to see school children being so respectful to a deceased family member! We are so proud of Mrs. Fry's class for being a great example of respect!*

This makes my day!

Please know I am committed to inundating the Jersey 100 community with **JUST BE JERSEY** stories – those very powerful, positive narratives that feature our kids, our staff, our community doing amazing things! Enough of the negative. Please continue sending these wonderful stories! **JUST BE JERSEY** is spreading throughout the community! WOOO HOOOO!!!

Thank you for all you do for kids!

This email made me smile! J A mother sent me this to sing the praises of the football boys who call themselves Panthers...
Mrs. Hopkins, Last Thursday night I had the pleasure of helping to serve dinner to the football team. They more than exemplified the true meaning of "Just Be Jersey". They were polite and considerate of the moms that were serving the dinner. They said "Thank you, ma'am!" and "Yes, please!". I was so impressed with their manners. But it wasn't just how they acted toward the adults that got my attention. They were helpful and kind to each other. It was more than just guys hanging out with their team. They treated each other like family. Way to go, Panthers! I am so proud of all of our young men.

Sincerely,
One Proud Mom

So when you see these young gentlemen who exemplified the JUST BE JERSEY way, please extend a hand, a kind word, or a genuine smile. Like Mom, I am proud as well! Please thank them for representing Jersey in way that makes you proud, too!

Another example of how the JUST BE JERSEY way continues to grow... J

We had some high school students that volunteered some of their Saturday morning of Homecoming to perform for the Apple Fest. It was great that they took time out of a busy weekend to do this! Mrs. Luanne Taul would be able to tell you about it. It was great that she arranged all of it!

Jamie Lumma
First Grade Teacher
Grafton Elementary School

So...I requested more information from Mrs. Taul, and she provided the following:

The Annual Apple Fest was held this weekend at the Cheney Mansion from 9:00 am to 5:00 pm. The Historical Society asks the high school each year to provide some entertainment. Even though it was Homecoming weekend, several high school students volunteered to entertain from 9:00 - 10:00. Those students were Connor Ashlock, Dylan Suttles, Valerie Tonsor, Brittney Blackorby, Ziarrah Fox, Kendrick Lumma, Olivia Beauchamp, Lauren Leady, and Taylor Lott. Hannah Warren from Brighton was also on hand to sing and play the piano. I could not have been more proud of them.

At 10:00, the 8th grade chorus began their portion of the program. There are currently 54 students in 8th grade choir and 48 were in attendance. They sang several folk songs and patriotic songs (one of Mrs. Hopkins’ favorites, "God Bless the USA") and were AWESOME!!! Several students sang solos and narrated the program. Mrs. Shannon Brown accompanied the 8th graders. Giving of our talents for a community-sponsored event is definitely part of the "Just Being Jersey" attitude.
Last, but not least, we had some microphone issues and were almost not able to perform if not for the efforts of Brad Pickel, Michelle Pickel’s husband. He and David and Connor Brown helped us set up the PA system and then Brad stayed around to adjust and reset the microphones again. He actually sat on the ground in front of the stage through part of the performance. I feel so fortunate to be a part of Jersey County where we are always willing to help each other when needed. Brad saved the day for the JCHS music students!!

Thank you so much, Mrs. Lumma, for being a voice of JUST BE JERSEY news! Thank you so much, Mrs. Taul, for your contribution to our students, Jersey 100, and the entire community! Once again, this is just another reason why one should feel blessed to be part of this community. To all who played a part – WAY to JUST BE JERSEY!!!

I received this from Mrs. Julie Goheen!

I just wanted to share the wonderful news regarding the chili supper Friday night. We sold 957 which 879 tickets were turned in, plus we served 118 walk ins. So all in all, we served chili, hot dogs and a drink to 997 people!!! It is the best turn out ever to my knowledge.

The community, and all the band parents, students, and friends of band, stepped up to the plate and really helped out the organization! Just wanted to share how the community and all involved was exemplifying "Just Be Jersey"...

Make it a great week!

This is wonderful news! So thrilled to hear how the community comes together for a good cause. Thank you, Mrs. Goheen, for sharing, and thanks to all who participated in this event in some way or another for JUST BEING JERSEY! J

Thank you, Mr. Tonsor, for sharing another JUST BE JERSEY story...

Retired teacher and coach Phil Mann is an IHSA football official. He does our district a great service: He contacts his friends from the area who serve as IHSA football officials and schedules them to officiate our underclass football games. For the most part, we get varsity level officials at our underclass games. I have been at schools where this did not happen. It works here only because Mr. Mann does this for us. We thank him for his service and dedication to our Jersey students! We thank him for modeling the JUST BE JERSEY way!