

Gift giver

Barbie Marcœ founded the nonprofit Lexie's Gift two years ago in honor of her daughter Lexie Valverde, killed in a car accident. The nonprofit also runs Lexie's Prom Boutique, a place for local kids in need to get free prom attire, including dresses, tuxes, shoes and jewelry. It's in Shoppers Square. Learn more here: <https://goo.gl/rURahG>.

What is Lexie's Gift?

Lexie's Gift was started in memory of my daughter. Lexie was in a car accident when she was 29, right before her 30th birthday. And we had been planning a 30th birthday for her, so rather than planning her birthday, I now had to just kind of keep busy. And we decided to do gift bags in her honor. So we put together 30 gift bags, and I put out a plea to all of my friends just to bring something cool to put in the gift bags. So people brought shampoo and blankets and whatever.

And you distributed them just to people in need?

Yep. We went to Bristlecone, where Lexie used to work—and we handed out the 30 gift bags to the clients at Bristlecone Family Resources. From there, it just kind of exploded. People just kept bringing stuff, and I kept finding a place for it. Pretty soon it was taking up a room in my house—and then two rooms in my house. As it grew, I had friends convince me to start a nonprofit. I started the nonprofit, basically,



PHOTO/JERI CHADWELL

with what I'll call my village by my side. ... We were never supposed to be this big. ... And it just got bigger and bigger. We started out working with a couple of different charities as the behind-the-scenes people. We started donating things to charities. ... It was just carloads of stuff delivered on a weekly basis. We went through the donations and made sure they weren't stained or outdated. ...

How did the prom boutique come about?

We had started Lexie's Gift. We'd built a tiny house and brought it around, and people got to shop in the tiny house. We were contacted by a couple of people who said, "Can you guys do a prom boutique, a prom closet?" We said, "Absolutely not. We have no prom dresses. When is the season?" And they said, "In two weeks." We said, "Absolutely not." And then the

girls started calling us. ... And so we put a plea out and partnered with Junior League and said, "OK, you guys. We have to find lots of prom dresses so we can do this closet." ... And in about a week's time we'd collected about a hundred prom dresses. We set up at various businesses and go into their parking lots and set up dresses. The dresses kept coming in, and the kids kept coming in. We were open about a month, like twice a week, and I think we handed out just shy of 200 dresses.

How does it work?

This year Shoppers Square donated space to us. All of the space was free. Otherwise, we couldn't have done it. We put a plea out this year and said, "We have the space. We need dresses." Lulus.com donated a thousand dresses. We went down to Chico to pick them up. ... This took us about two months to set up. We have it through the end of the month. It'll take us a month to take down. ...

And it's free for them?

It's all free. Everything we do is free. The majority of these people don't have five dollars for a dress, or 10 dollars. It doesn't sound like much to us, but to a kid who doesn't have anything—whose parents are trying to pay the power bill—10 bucks is a lot.

How can people get involved?

Right now, we're trying to raise money for space—for permanent space. ... Facebook is the best way [to make contact]. We have a website, lexiesgift.com, and we have a donate space there. □

NOTES FROM THE NEON BABYLON

BY BRUCE VAN DYKE

Running the numbers

OK, so us donkey Dems have approximately 10 declared candidates for the presidency, and this situation appears to be, as we like to say these days, fluid. While I couldn't tell you much about the positions of specific candidates at this time, I can say with unbudgeable confidence that each and every one of them would be at least 759 times better at the job than the current dim bulb dotard.

Give an ear to the humble mayor of South Bend, Pete Buttigieg (boot-a-judge), who turns out to be a rather brilliant man, a guy who is to genuine intellectual competence what Trump is to french fries. Buttigieg knows how to competently and confidently express himself, and he sounds like a quality, substantial human being every time he opens his mouth. I'm guessing he will accumulate some cred early on in the campaign and eventually be taken seriously. Those in charge of

organizing the debates are gonna have their hands full.

You wanna see a Republican launch a prime time, 4-star shirt? (And really, who doesn't?) Well, just mention "Green New Deal" and "Big Taxes on Ultra-Rich." Two large national programs that are obviously sane, productive and timely. And AOC? The daughter of Lucifer herself! A socialist demon queen who supports mandatory rabies! Hey ReTrumpicans, mess with AOC at your peril. This woman is a budding superstar.

As usual, it's completely appropriate to tell Trumpazoans, as civilly as you can, to calm the fuck down. Here are the numbers behind the thoroughly reasonable proposal of the wealth tax, that great affront to American greed. It would kick in on all estates of \$50 million or more. Fifty million! As in *fifty million*. Those folks fortunate

enough not to have been busted as they accumulated these massive estates would be required to pay a two percent tax (minimum of a mill). For estates of a billion or more, the tax would be three percent (a minimum of 30 million).

The number of people who would actually be affected by this tax is frightfully tiny—as in 75,000 households would incur the 50 mill tax, and a eentsy teentsy miniscule 1,000 households would get slapped with the billionaire action. That's *it!* A grand total of 76,000 households, and if we compute four peeps per household, then about 300,000 people would be affected by this plan. In other words, slightly less than .1 percent of the population. *One-tenth of one percent*, to be ravaged by this savagely sinister socialism.

Gee, what a tragedy. You think Reginald will be able to top off the bleeping yacht? □



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