

Be a listener in the turmoil

There are so many things to say about race, riots and rights. I've lost sleep these last few weeks — questioning how I contribute to the issues positively.

What follows will not address the many things that need to be said about race, riots and rights.

It's not my voice on these issues that everyone needs to hear, but everyone does need to be listening.

Saturday's demonstration led by Tanisha DeRungs at the Mora High School parking lot reminded me of the silent power of listening.

Approximately 80 members of the community attended, and for over two hours stood, listening as people were given the opportunity to be heard. Some

cried. Some laughed. Each person who chose to speak shared their experiences of how issues of race affected their lives.

And that was it. The crowd eventually dispersed, and if the others there were anything like me, they left thoughtful.



Editor

Kirsten Faurie

A CHILD'S CONCEPT

The concept of listening, and feeling empathy for others seems like a basic concept many have forgotten how to utilize. I was reminded of it myself from a children's book. We first discovered "The Rabbit Listened" by Cori Doerrfeld, at the public library.

In it, a child creates something which is destroyed. Animals come to the child, giving the child their advice on how to grieve or move past the trauma: You should feel mad, sad, talk, laugh, hide, forget, remember, or want to hurt others.

Each animal is well-intentioned in its advice, but when the child doesn't do these things, each animal leaves. The child sits alone until the rabbit comes.

The rabbit does nothing except be near the child and listen. Eventually the child talks to the rabbit about their anger and sadness, wanting to laugh, hide, forget, remember and hurt others.

After being heard, the child is ready to rebuild — and this time with plans for it to be better than ever before.

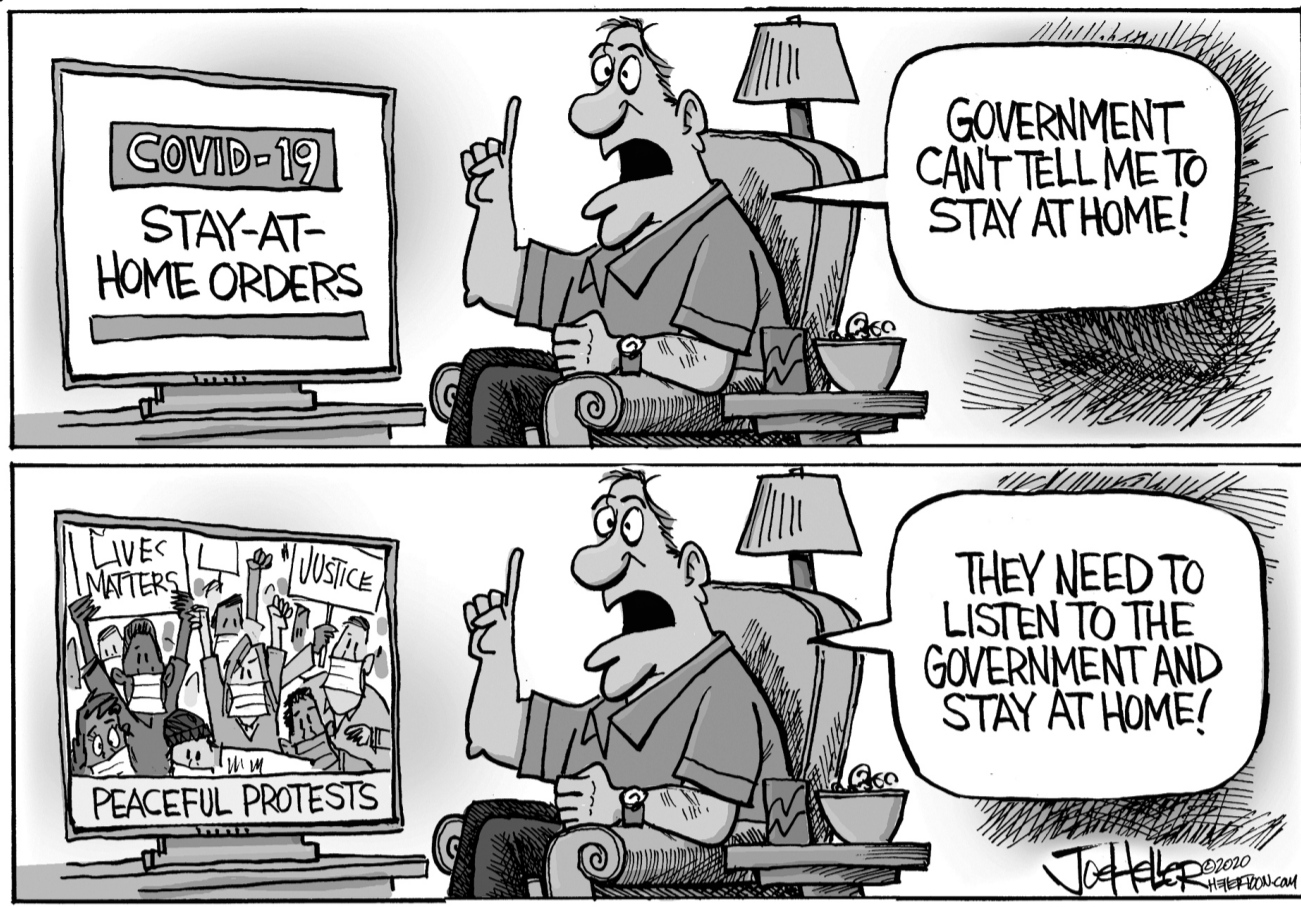
STAY AND REBUILD

Contrary to what a lot of rabbits do in stories, this rabbit did not run, nor do I think anyone should run away from the decisions ahead which are sure to be challenging.

At Saturday's demonstration, one man asked the crowd, "What is a guy like me supposed to do?" It's OK to not know. Listening isn't a bit of trivia, where at the end someone is going to ask you for an answer on whether you agree or disagree. It isn't about you or forming your own perspective.

As we move forward, start with listening. Choose empathy as the first step to understanding. Eventually, we will find a way to rebuild in a way that is better than it was before.

KIRSTEN FAURIE is the editor of the Kanabec County Times. She can be contacted at editor@moraminn.com or by calling 320-225-5128.



LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Gardens of Mora enrich community

To the editor,
Oh my gosh, I am always so enriched and blessed by all the eye catching flowers/gardens that are scattered around in Mora's public places. Much, much thanks for those who have put effort and artist touch into making the town of Mora uniquely alive and beautiful! I always wonder, who are you anyway?

Deb Newton
Mora

News media excites hate

To the editor,
First we were afraid to leave our homes because of the COVID-19 pandemic; now many Americans fear leaving their homes due to lawlessness and violence in their neighborhoods.

Yes, another stressed out cop killed a man in custody. And if that wasn't enough to enrage you, the news media had to spin it into a racial killing. That cop would have killed that man no matter what color he was; the cop was simply stressed out and out of control.

From the outside looking in, it appears that the news media did their best to give the hate-filled rioters a reason to steal, destroy and kill. We're not talking about an impromptu and peaceful demonstration either; what we witnessed was a planned and organized coup de main. The rioters were not only ready to riot; they were prepared to launch an assault against the country at the drop of a hat. The news media just gave them the cue.

Something has got to change. Black people are being filled with

hate by the media and racist black groups who are pointing their fingers in our direction. The accusations aren't true, just like everything else the news media tells us. Think about it. Who are the real victims?

Arthur Kottke
Mora

Good will defines America

To the editor,
"Make America Great Again," Donald Trump didn't do that, George Floyd did. After more than three years of our president's bombastic self-regard and hypocrisy, it took the murder of an unlikely black citizen to bring out the true magnitude of America's righteousness.

We are all born with racist potential. It is the expression of outrage towards ourselves as imperfect brothers and sisters of a common goal, "Peace on Earth, Good Will Toward Men," that defines our greatness.

Pete Stewart
Mora

Actions of a few don't represent all

To the editor,
For all of you in law enforcement, a big thank you for doing your job in keeping us safe. Whenever I meet an officer's car on the road or see an officer in uniform I have a feeling of respect and gratitude because I know their job is designed to keep us safe.

We were all in agreement that the actions or inactions by several police officers in Minneapolis were not acceptable but in no way represent the vast law enforcement in

our country. I am deeply troubled when our media and some of our citizens continue to use the term "police brutality," when there are really very few incidents of that nature.

I would like to see the media post these 2019 factual figures from the FBI. In 2019 law enforcement made 10 million arrests. There were 1,004 fatalities that happened in situations like police shootouts with law breakers. There were 41 fatalities that occurred when unarmed men were shot by police. Of the 41 people shot, 19 were white and nine were black.

In 2019 there were 89 law enforcement officers killed in the line of duty, most recently a young man from the Grand Forks police department. Thanks to all of you in Kanabec County that are serving our community. The next time you see one of them thank them for keeping us safe.

Byron Lindaman
Ogilvie

QUOTABLES

'If the only people we are able to extend empathy to are those who are like us, who come from the same country we do, or who share our faith, then we misunderstand what empathy is.'

Clint Smith

KANABEC COUNTY
TIMES



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