

OUR VIEW

Solidarity shines in battling a rural fire

It was an amazing show of solidarity Saturday afternoon in rural Steele County.

Armed with their tractors and plows, farmers in Lemond Township north of Beaver Lake came to the rescue of helping area firefighters battle a stubborn corn field fire that threatened not only crops, but nearby hog buildings.

Without any prompting from fire officials, the farmers simply showed up and began plowing up dirt in an effort to create a buffer around the standing corn and snuff out the fire. There were no less than eight tractors helping put out the fire.

As Ellendale Fire Chief Logan Busho points out, the farmers stood to lose more than the fire department with its equipment. Busho said most of the tractors cost well over \$100,000 each while the fire trucks are worth maybe about half that amount.

Busho is thankful for the sacrifices made by the farmers in helping his firefighters bring the blaze under control, which took three area departments nearly five hours to complete. He says the farmers kept the situation from getting worse and saved the land owners from suffering thousands of dollars in crop losses.

In this era of living in a divided world on many issues, it's gratifying to see that there is still human decency left in our lives. People are willing to help others when push comes to shove. And that was no more evident than last weekend outside of Ellendale.

Such unity seems to happen more often in smaller communities. We want to applaud the firefighters and farmers for risking their lives and equipment to prevent a situation from having a tragic outcome.

As Busho made a point of saying after it was all over, this is definitely a great reminder of why we live in such a great community, which in this case is not only Ellendale, but also the greater community of Steele County.

GUEST COLUMN

How about spreading encouragement to others?

BY JAN MITTELSTADT TIPPETT

Way back when Abraham Lincoln said: *In times like the present, men should utter nothing for which they would not willingly be responsible through time and in eternity.*

I would like to think that an updated version of that call would include women, of course. Unfortunately, there are way too many people (men and women) in our world who do not follow the 16th president's plea. Way. Too. Many.

As we approach the national holiday of Thanksgiving, a holiday that will be different from many other Thanksgivings that we have celebrated, I offer my encouragement to the dear readers three and anyone else who could be listening (or reading) to celebrate the positive and to offer encouragement and support to those around us.

Let us start with the simple phrase, "thank you." I don't understand why some people have trouble showing those who serve and help them that they are appreciated. Those two words are part of basic good manners and using them is simply common sense. Those who receive thanks know how much the

job they are doing is appreciated. And in these Covid times, the appreciation for people who show up and work should be even more loudly and persistently thanked.

Then there's thanking the people in our lives who are gifts, huge gifts to us. I am fortunate to have friends and family members who by their very presence make me feel better. I'm lucky and I bet that many of you share that same gratefulness for the people in your life who make you feel special and who will listen to you, encourage you, and support your decisions without sharing those actions and thoughts with the world.

I fail at times to let these people just how much they mean to me. It's one of those failures that comes, not from a lack of appreciation, but instead from not being deliberate and intentional. Bad excuse, I know.

There are probably hundreds of different ways to offer your encouragement. Back in Contact training with leaders Jackie Ostlund and Lonna Lysne, we were given a handout from the Family and Education Center in Mankato. This piece of paper is one of the sheets that I have kept and hauled around for decades.

It offers 50 ways say "good for you."

I'm not going to list all 50, but here are 10:

- Thank you very much
- I like being with you
- Good for you
- I appreciate what you have done (what you mean to me...)
- I can tell you really care
- It looks as if you put a lot of work into this
- That's a very good observation
- I'm so glad to be here with you.
- Terrific effort
- Good thinking

For example, saying "that's an interesting way of looking at it" or "that's an interesting point," or "very interesting" or "that's one way of looking at it" can keep the conversation going and is certainly more positive than shouting "are you out of your mind?" or "you are as dumb as a hammer" or "losers act like that" or other even less attractive words.

However, tempting it would to resort to negativism and harsh words, President Lincoln would not be proud.

Thanks for reading.

Jan Mittelstadt Tippett is a retired daily newspaper editor and publisher. She returned to her hometown of Owatonna in 2015. She can be reached at jtippett@midco.net.

Fighting the curse of the postal service

It's the curse of the postal service.

That's what I am fighting once again with the U.S. Post Office, the agency that I rely on to deliver this newspaper each week to our readers.

We have been experiencing unusually long delays in recent weeks with some of our readers getting their newspaper. For example, the Oct. 28 edition did not reach the homes of the readers outside of the four county area of Steele, Dodge, Mower and Freeborn counties until Thursday, Nov. 5, more than one week after the paper was published. How agonizing and absurd, to say the least! Many of these same readers generally get the paper within two to three days after it is printed.

I'll admit my blood pressure goes through the roof when readers can't get our product when they are supposed to. As I continue to deal with a host of complaints, I know the same goes for our readers who are equally upset about not getting their paper. And I can't say I blame them.

I'd like to share what happens with our newspapers so that everyone understands our process. Unless it's a major



Hot Pursuit
RICK BUSSLER

holiday, the newspaper arrives back from our printing plant in Madelia early Wednesday afternoon. Depending on where you live, the papers are immediately dropped off at post offices in Blooming Prairie, Ellendale or Owatonna. If you don't live in either of those communities, the papers are funneled into the Blooming Prairie post office.

But here's where it gets complicated and sets us up for disaster with readers.

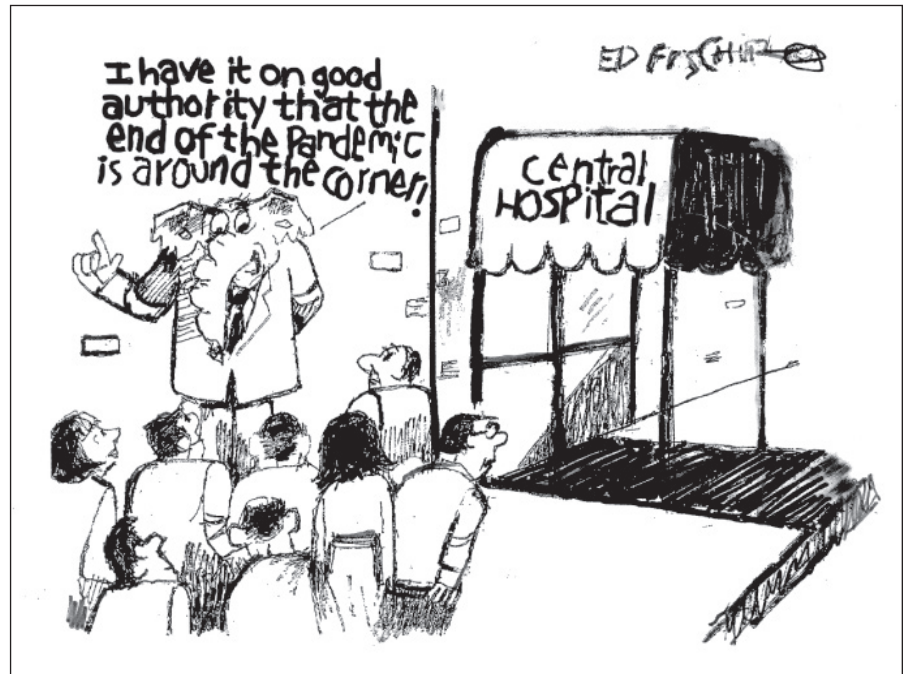
The Blooming Prairie office sends the papers on the mail truck to Rochester Wednesday afternoon. Once they arrive in Rochester, the papers are routed to the Twin Cities and then sent out to whichever post office. So, for example, if you live in Austin, the paper goes from Blooming Prairie to Rochester to the Twin Cities and back down to Austin.

From what I have been able to determine with little help from the postal service, the black hole in the process seems to be at the Twin Cities distribution center where the papers sit in the corner and accumulate dust for days before being shipped out. Why this is happening is anybody's guess. And, don't expect anybody to give an answer, at least in a timely manner.

Of course, nobody wants to take any accountability and provide me with answers as to what is going on. I've requested several times through the Blooming Prairie postmaster regarding this matter of which has been to no avail. Not even a return phone call. In fact, the BP postmaster commented something to the effect when I asked to speak to her boss, "I don't know why you would want to call her because she doesn't even return my calls."

It's beyond my comprehension how an organization can operate in a manner like that. I understand there are going to be a few hiccups now and then with things, but

SEE FIGHTING, A3



YOUR VIEW

PRICELESS stories make me want to read the Times

Dear Editor,
As I read the story in the Nov. 4, 2020 issue about the Priceless Photo, I became very intrigued with the story. I do not know any of the people in the story, but it still kept me very interested in reading the whole story. The more I read, the more I wanted to keep reading. The writer, Rick Bussler took a very sad and emotional happening for the Rogotzke family, where Rocky died soon after the wedding photo and turned the fun-loving photo into something that the family will be

able to cherish forever.
As sad as this is for Rocky to die soon after the wedding, I think that Rick did a great job of putting the story together using the photo taken at the wedding by Skye Devoe.
The family will be able to cherish this story forever with the great writing of Rick. Of course, there would not be a story if it were not for the photo taken by Skye. She did a fantastic job of capturing one of the special fun loving moments.

I send my best wishes to Logan and Bailey

in starting their life together and with this photo and story to remember the fun-loving times of Rocky.

Thank you goes to Skye for taking the photo, the Rogotzke family for sharing this photo and a thank you to Rick for writing this story to share with everyone.

This is one of the reasons that we subscribe to the Steele County Times, the stories are more in depth and sincere, and to use part of the caption, PRICELESS!

Carl Wieman
Owatonna

STEELE COUNTY Times

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2017—2 state and 3 national awards
2016—8 state and 6 national awards
2015—7 state and 4 national awards
2014—3 state and 5 national awards
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