



Jean Matua "From the Heart"

One of the last of a generation?

Bob Dole died last week, at the ripe old age of 98. He was a true public servant: serving in the military, in the Senate, and running for president.

He was a straight-shooter. He knew how to "disagree without being disagreeable," truly a lost art these days. He said what he meant and meant what he said, so all knew exactly where he stood, unwavering, to either agree or disagree with him. Unlike too many politicians today, he did not have multiple personas or multiple stories, depending on his audience or whom he needed to sweet-talk this week. He had no need to talk back any of his comments because he truly meant everything he said.

Bob Dole did not blame his staff, colleagues, media, or social media for a misstep, or getting caught saying something he shouldn't. He took full responsibility for his missteps, and whatever he said was the same regardless of the audience or the medium.

Bob Dole knew that the very essence of our democracy is compromise. He knew when to give and to take and, by all accounts, he was a tough negotiator. But he knew that forward movement required cooperation, and that cooperation often required compromise.

Bob Dole approached everything with a sense of humor. His funeral speakers reflected that, both his appreciation of brevity and of humor. Dole's brand of humor also is a lost art. He could bring diverging sides together with a good quip, at least for a few moments of laughter.

Even when not in office, Bob Dole served his country. The World War II Memorial in D.C. was his pet project, something he was passionate about and played a large part in creating. He personally greeted and welcomed thousands of veterans to that memorial over the years, quietly and personally, without the fanfare of TV crews or a press corps.

This was personal for him, and he served his fellow veterans even when no one was paying attention.

Far too many elected officials – at many levels, but especially at the top – seem to have forgotten the "servant" part of being a public servant. Instead, it seems they are in government to serve their own not-so-hidden agendas rather than to serve their electorate at home, or serve the good of their country as a whole. They seem far more focused on personal benefits to themselves than benefits to their countrymen. They refuse to cooperate or, god forbid, to compromise. If the deal being considered didn't come in their favored red- or blue-colored package, they would rather reject it sight-unseen than even consider it; and everyone suffers for their intransigence.

Instead of humor and camaraderie, many of today's politicians peek out from behind their red or blue fortresses to poke jabs at each other. Childish, playground-bully jabs. They may think this is humor, and a few may share a chuckle in deriding, mocking, and harassing fellow elected officials. But taunting someone by questioning their intelligence, or wisecracking about their appearance or family or ethnicity or religion is the lowest form of behavior from people who clearly should know better. Playground bully tactics from adults are pathetic, and only make the bully look small and inept.

Unfortunately, it's not only politicians in national office who resort to such low tactics. Every political meme that you may share on social media, attacking an opponent's appearance or intelligence or abilities, is an act of bullying. I put forth that few of us would say the things contained in these memes and posts directly to the face of the person being attacked. It is a cowardly act. And it makes you look small and powerless, lashing out like

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See pages 8-9 for some LOCAL suggestions.

a small child on the playground who hasn't been taught better. But we all know better, don't we?

So let's all be a bit more like Bob Dole, shall we? Not Republican or Democrat, not old-school or Young Turk, but cooperative residents of Earth who need to get along to move forward. Who can disagree without being disagreeable. Who can be kind without being weak. Who can share humor that is not at the expense of others. Straightforward people of our word. Be the bigger and better person rather than wallowing with the bullies.

This is a tall order, to be sure. But I know that each of us is capable of it. Working together, across all kinds of man-made lines of division, we can move mountains – or win wars, or build monuments, just like Bob Dole.

Federal student loan repayment to resume in February

Borrowers who were able to pause their federal student loan repayment over the last 18 months will need to resume making payments soon, with interest beginning in February, according to KHEAA.

KHEAA advises borrowers to make sure their loan servicer has their current contact information. If you don't know who your loan servicer is, you can find it by logging into your account at studentaid.gov. The information will be under the My Aid section.

Your loan servicer can also help if you expect to have trouble restarting repayment of your loans. In that case, contact your loan servicer as soon as possible. They can help you find the

repayment plan that best fits your finances and could reduce your monthly payment.

KHEAA a public, non-profit agency established in 1966 to improve students' access to college. It provides information about financial aid and financial literacy at no cost to students and parents.

The agency also helps colleges manage their student loan default rates and verify information submitted on the FAFSA. For more information about those services, visit www.kheaa.com.

In addition, KHEAA disburses private Advantage Education Loans on behalf of its sister agency, KHESLC. For more information, visit www.advantageeducationloan.com.

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MSUM expects more than 500 students to graduate Dec. 16

Minnesota State University Moorhead will award degrees to more than 500 students during its fall commencement program Thursday, Dec. 16, in the university's Nemzek Fieldhouse. The 1 p.m. ceremony also includes about 147 graduate students.

For those who can't attend commencement, it will be streamed live online at www.mnstate.edu/registrar/graduation/.

The following students from your area are expected to graduate.

- (Name, Major (Degree), High School, City)
- Shelby Geiser-Norgaard, Curriculum & Instruction (MS), Hutchinson High School, Watkins.
- Abigail Larson, Psychology (BA), Maple Lake High School, Saint Augusta.

News of our students

University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee – 2021 fall graduation. Virtual commencement exercises will be Sunday, Dec. 19, in Milwaukee

- South Haven, Michael Vossen, College of Letters and Science, Master of Science.

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