

COMMENTARY

A little positivity

By Guy T. Soland
Chatfield, MN

In today's world, it's sometimes tough to find positivity, it's a mindset, to stay positive, that most people, including myself need to work on at times. Negativity is everywhere – news, social media... it's not tough to find. but, every day I find something that I'm thankful for. I'm so blessed with so many things – God, wife, kids, family, friends, food, clothes, house, job, etc. In a world with COVID and new war, there are people every-



Guy Soland

where doing their part with their professions, and I just wanted to than them and let them know they are appreciated.

God Bless teachers and staff, principals, superintendents, bus drivers, paras, lunch workers, custodians, coaches and referees, and all associated with school systems. Please thank them, they're doing a wonderful job. These jobs were tough pre-pandemic and now even tougher. All school employees: you are appreciated! Thank you!

God Bless daycare providers. Thanks for your hard work taking care of our kids, sometimes for long hours, and helping develop young minds like teachers as well. Thank you. You are appreciated!

God Bless medical professionals: doctors, nurses, surgical techs and assistants, all associated with hospitals everywhere. You had a tough job and now, even tougher. Please thank these people. You are also appreciated.

God Bless police officers, EMTs, firefighters, ambulance crews, first responders. In this day and age, unfortunately we all know these are thankless jobs, like some others, full-time and volunteers. In our small town area, these people are so vital. Please thank these people. You are appreciated.

God Bless farmers for getting us food on the table and working hard each and every day to make it happen! You are appreciated. Thank you so much.

God Bless pastors, preachers and all church leaders. Now more than ever, you have a

tough job. But, you provide hope, love and leadership every service and every day in between. Thank you, you are appreciated.

God Bless carpenters, construction workers, international, national, state, city and township employees, electricians, plumbers, truck drivers, pilots, factory workers, mechanics, lawyers, bankers, the creators of this paper and papers everywhere so I could put this in print. And thousands of professions everywhere, thanks and you are appreciated.

A hug God Bless you, also, for our military! There are bigger things going on in our world than the small things that we complain about or get offended by, and that's a war in Ukraine right now. Our military has, is, and always will be so vital to this country. Any

chance you get, thank a vet or current service member. These men and women are serving all over this world now and have in the past. Can you imagine where we'd be without them? Thank you all for your service and continued service. God Bless your hearts!

Points being made in this is we need some positivity. We're all human, we've all got our stuff, but we all need each other. God made people for people and we're all essential. Maybe someone next week will add to the positivity and add those I forgot to mention this week. Also, please pray for all, Ukraine, our military, our leaders and president, and try to remember to be thankful. Don't judge, because there's only one judge, and learn to laugh and love. God Bless you all!

When facts and truths don't mix

By John Torgrimson
Lanesboro, MN

When the priest who taught my religion class my sophomore year in high school asked if anyone wanted to attend a lecture by Mulford Q. Sibley, four of us raised our hands.

Sibley, an avowed socialist and pacifist, who encouraged civil disobedience, was a Sociology professor at the University of Minnesota. He was a Quaker who became a conscientious objector during World War II. He was an early and loud critic of the Vietnam War.

My hometown of Austin, Minn., was all stirred up that a "commie-pinko" was being

given a platform to espouse his wicked ideas. And at a public middle school no less. It was 1965. The Cold War was in full bloom and we were being told that we needed to stop Communism 6,000 miles away in an Asian country that most of us couldn't find on a map. And here was this guy saying that America was off its tracks – Socialism was better than Capitalism; war solves nothing; and people in developing countries have the same right of self-determination as we do.

I was curious about what the fuss was about and wanted to see this person who some were calling a Communist up close. I was 14. My parents, when asked by the school, said that I had their permission to go.

What I remember from that evening was the man's courage. To stand up in front of a standing-room-only auditorium

(many of them WW II veterans) and talk about what he believed in, to share his ideas and beliefs, knowing full well that most of the people in the room had it in for him. Many came just to see the fireworks and there he stood at the end of the night answering questions and taking chest-thumping insults from many who didn't come to listen in the first place.

I remember Sibley's main message being about truth, giving an example of a light on the ceiling.

What I see as truth, you may not see as truth. Look up at those lights on the ceiling. Now, I say that the light up there is yellow and I am pretty adamant about that. But no, you say there is a blue tint to it, that you can't say that it is yellow. It must be blue you think. So, you see, we may hold different truths. The fact is that we are looking at the same light, but its color is subjective to our individual selves. We hold different truths.

She says, "God exists." He says, "God doesn't exist." These are truths. Beliefs. Not facts. Truths may include facts, but facts are indisputable. They exist in real time and are identifiable.

When Putin calls an invasion of Ukraine a Special Military Exercise, he too is playing with the facts. We know it as an act of war. Yet, when my nephew's wife, who is Russian, tells her family in Moscow about what Putin is doing in Ukraine, they don't believe her. Putin is fighting the Nazis aggressors they said.

Dictators alter the facts to create their own truths so that they can manipulate the masses. It's called propaganda – the deliber-

ate manipulation of facts and half-truths to influence public opinion. What Putin is doing in Russia is what Xi Jinping is doing in China, saying the minority Uighurs are going to vocational school and not forced re-education. It is what Donald Trump is doing when he says the election was rigged, altering the facts to serve a different truth.

If you tell a lie long enough some people believe it. It becomes their truth, regardless of what the facts say otherwise.

Sibley died in 1989. A quiet grove on the West Bank of the University of Minnesota, described as a place to rest and think, is named in his honor.



John Torgrimson

Government this Week

Monday, April 4

- Fillmore County Commissioners, Courthouse, 9 a.m.
- City of Houston Planning Commission/EDA, City Hall, 5:30 p.m.
- Lanesboro City Council, City Hall, 6 p.m.
- Preston City Council, City Hall, 6 p.m.
- LeRoy City Council, Community Center, 6:30 p.m.

Tuesday, April 5

- Houston County Commissioners, Courthouse, 9 a.m.
- Ostrander City Council, Community Center, 6:30 p.m.
- Rushford Village City Council, City Hall, 6:45 p.m.

Wednesday, April 6

- Fountain City Council, City Hall, 7 p.m.

Thursday, April 7

- Houston School Board, High School Library, 6 p.m.

Monday, April 11

- Whalan City Council, City Hall, 5 p.m.
- Caledonia City Council, City Hall, 6 p.m.
- Grand Meadow City Council, Community Center, 6 p.m.
- Houston City Council, City hall, 6 p.m.
- Kingsland School Board Work Session, Elementary Conference Room, 6 p.m.
- Spring Valley City Council, City Hall, 6 p.m.
- City of Rushford City Council, City Hall, 6:30 p.m.
- Chatfield City Council, City Hall, 7 p.m.
- Wykoff City Council, City Hall, 7 p.m.

**Schedule subject to change.*



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