

Community Comment  
February 14, 2014  
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### A Valentine Greeting

And a happy Valentine's Day to you. This is one of my favorite un-holidays. As far as I know, no one is closed for this day yet it is widely celebrated by people of all ages. My nine year old granddaughter is busy making Valentines for her classmates and teachers at school. My three year old grandson enjoys the sweets that come in so many yummy forms all week long. The ARMACK musicians are providing Valentunes as a fund raiser for their trip to London. Young couples take advantage to express their love to their special someone in a thoughtful and romantic way on this day. Long married couples re-affirm their special bond and celebrate the history they share.

But it's not just for couples. Friends share warm Valentine wishes for being part of their extended family. On Wednesday, my Rotary Club celebrated the day with some stories of love and devotion among people that we know. But beyond that, we also celebrated the goal of world peace. A peaceful existence, with the opportunity for some security and happiness, is the goal of Rotary International. This kind of expression of love and compassion for our fellow earth dwellers is one the reasons I enjoy the work that Rotary does in the world.

We live in a World that is busy and exhausting. We struggle to make a living and to provide for our families. We are blessed or lucky, you pick the description, to have been born in the United States of America. With all our faults, our political quarrels, our economic ups and downs, and our imperfect realization of equal opportunity for all, we have a wonderful place to call home. The World still looks to us for inspiration and we still try to give help where and when we can. All of this is far from perfect but it is clear to me that we try to get it right. It's a messy and complicated business to have a government that is still run by us and depends on the goodwill of us to solve the problems that confront us. It is slow going and frustrating, and as we grow larger in number it will be more so, but we will need to be more a part of the system and more willing than ever to seek common ground with those that have different points of view.

So, I have a Valentine wish for my friends and family, for political allies and opponents, for the well off and those not doing as well, for the local business owner and the worker that helps her business function, for the government employee and the person who needs his services, for democrats and republicans and to the exceptional and the average and the struggling American; I wish all of us the gift of civility.

America was founded in compromise and, in the end, civility allowed us to forge this country together. It seems to me that civility requires two characteristics; respect and empathy.

Our Humboldt community does civility better than most.

Practice civility; we will all be better for it. Happy Valentines Day

This has been Sam Pennisi for community comment