

Just Day after Pearl Harbor Day,

I read a couple of days ago about four Eureka ~~men~~ who were honored for their fifty years of service to our Community through Rotary Club. I am inclined to think that those ~~four men deserve their recognition~~. They are John Winzler, Al Crnich, Walt Shimasaki, and Ken Stodder. Why do they deserve attention? Because they have served their country and their community for over fifty years. The motto of Rotary Club is "Service above Self." I've heard that many service clubs ^{are} losing members around our nation. That disappoints, but does not surprise me, given the ethos ~~surrounding our country~~ today, which might be summarized as: "Self above all else."

I am a Baby Boomer and grew up in Southern California in the 1960's. When people referred to me and my peers as idealists: for resisting the draft, protesting the Viet Nam War and the middle class values, I had to laugh. What ideals? I think my generation was aptly described in Christopher Lassch's book *The Culture of Narcissism*, published in 1979.

The four men ~~that~~ Eureka Rotary Club ~~recently~~ recognized were part of my parent's generation, often referred to as "the greatest generation." Perhaps they were. I'll leave that to higher powers to decide. What I do know, is that the Boomers, Busters, Gen -X, Millennials, or whatever you want to call the succeeding generations, have a long ways to go to measure up. Those men and women of the greatest generation sacrificed immensely to defeat the great evils of German Fascism and Japanese imperialism. After defeating those seemingly implacable foes, they then forgave them, rebuilt their countries, reintroduced them to the world of free nations, and have maintained friendly relations ever since. I wonder if my generation or the younger ones could do the same?

~~This might sound like a tangent, but hang with me.~~ Virginia Tech has a basketball team, and a coach named Buzz Williams. He may have noticed his players were not paying much attention during the playing of the national anthem. Not sure. But he decided to bring in a group of veterans from all wars since WWII and have them stand, then sit, on the team's chairs. With the basketball team facing the veterans Coach Williams said this: "We did not earn these chairs. These guys when they were your age, interrupted their lives; they paused their education; they changed their careers; they gave their lives for these chairs. Do you guys understand what I'm saying? Not us, not us... and so when the anthem is played, we're going to stand like grown men, and we're going to honor men like this, so we could have a chair to sit in... that two and a half minutes will be given to these people that earned these chairs, because that freedom allows us to do what we're doing...."

The anthem played and I never ^{we hear} saw a basketball team pay closer attention to the mood and words of the Star Spangled Banner.

Service above self! ~~Among other things, that would mean we cultivate a deep and humble appreciation for those who sacrificed in order that we might have life as we know it;~~ that's what I'd like to see in our community and country. Hats off to the ~~greatest~~ ^{served dutifully} generation, who ~~put their lives on the line~~, so we could sit in the chairs of ~~comfort, opportunity,~~ ^{men & women of} ~~prosperity~~ and freedom.

the great

This has been Dan Price for Community Comment