

An Aries with an attitude

A Zephyr reader challenged me this morning and prompts this column. He said something like, "I liked one of your columns recently, it was positive." I know I tackle subjects of controversy, which many readers appreciate, but this guy asserted I was rarely positive in my writing.

Well, I'm here to tell you I've just reviewed my 39 columns published so far this year and 17 of them, nearly half, are positive and rather light in

nature. My last column, entitled, "Hootie and the Blowhards," about admitting women to Augusta National Golf Club was fairly light and certainly has one of my favorite headlines. (I write them.) I've written stories about Sally Blodgett, former Knox County Clerk, my National Federation of Press Women conference, my parents who have been married 70 years. Columns about patriotism, Knox graduates who provide leadership in the community, Railroad Days history and old fashioned summers all appeared in 2002.

The resemblance of my husband to Ed Asner was featured, telling humorous stories about people's reactions. "A sloth's guide to sightseeing" was about our vacation in Florida. "Charlie and Craig" was a story about Galesburg's Craig Johnson discovering his biological brother, who attended Knox College, neither knowing each other at the time and both men being good friends of mine in separate segments of my life. I wrote about the winter Olympics and some of the criteria of "winning." Oh, I snuck in a little sarcasm about politics, but what the heck - readers need to stay awake.

Space exploration is a favorite subject of mine and I'd given a paper about it to my study group, so that was the topic of a column. The early history of Galesburg's Downtown Village and relating it to the newest renovations, what primaries can do to a county political party and a feature story about security measures organized by our local law enforcement agencies round out the list of what I consider to be positive, informative, interesting subjects.

The worst, but maybe the most humorous column I had to write was to apologize to former president of First Galesburg National Bank and Trust, Dick Bishop, for stating in a column about the early Downtown Village that he was deceased. A friend here emailed me and the headline of that follow-up story was "Dick Bishop sighted in Florida."

Because the Zephyr is online, my columns since late 1999 are there and apparently appear in other web sites according to subject. I regularly receive e-mails from all over the country from people who have read past columns. Such an e-mail was from a gentleman who had just read last year's story about author Lance Zedric who wrote



about the Alamo Scouts, courageous and talented men operating behind enemy lines during World War II. The man has photos and other items he thinks indicate his Uncle was one of the Scouts. Zedric gave me permission to give him his phone number and email address.

A woman recently e-mailed me to find out the telephone number of Lee Smith after reading my story about the Lee and Carolyn and their mission work in the Ukraine. (Another positive story, sir.)

I've gotten some strong reactions to my story about Maytag, wherein I reviewed the nine million dollar plus funds they were given by Galesburg citizens and the State of Illinois in 1995 to stay in Galesburg. Workers and communities all over the country are experiencing the same betrayal by Maytag and other corporations. One reader contacting me is from Canton, Ohio and says the workers there are like zombies, they are so stunned and afraid of the future. This is not a positive story, but of course, it needs to be aired.

So, my friend, not everything I write is negative. In fact, anyone who has been interested in government and politics for over 40 years, as I have, has got to be an eternal optimist. Wouldn't you say?

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