

A nice try

A couple of weeks ago, something really great happened that got me thinking about the simple strength of being nice.

Jade Ohde was the catalyst for these reflections. Jade is a special-needs student and she graduated from Eagle Valley High School last spring. A couple of years ago, I wrote a story about how Jade is the Colorado Rockies' No. 1 fan. She loves her baseball team with a passion, just ask her family, friends or teachers.

I ran into Jade's mom, Andie Ohde, at the Screaming Eagle Golf Tournament last spring. Andie told me that Jade has expanded her sport-team support to include the Colorado Buffaloes. That was nice for me to hear, being a bit of a Buff buff myself.



PAM BOYD
Editor

So knowing that I had a kindred fan spirit in Jade, I contacted David Plati, the Associate Athletic Director/Sports Information at CU. Plati is a college classmate of mine and a really nice guy. When I told him about Jade and how she was a true Buffs fan who wouldn't be deterred by coaching changes or conference switches or season records, he decided she was the type of fan CU needs. He sent her a copy of the book he wrote, "Colorado Football Vault," and promised to remember her birthday on Nov. 12.

Then, six months later, Plati was nice enough to make good on his promise and arranged for Jade and her mom and a couple of guests (I was lucky enough to be one of them) to attend the Arizona game complete with sideline passes. We were only a few feet away from Ralphie when she charged onto the field. Everyone was so nice to us that day. Jade had a great birthday and I had a really nice time spending it with her. The Buffs were even nice enough to win the game.

As I reflected on all this kindness, I started thinking about how it feels to be nice. We live in a small town, and most of the time people understand that you need to be nice to the people you interact with during the course of the day because you are going to run into those same people when you stop by the Eagle Pharmacy or City Market or the post office. You will see them at your kids' soccer games or at Flight Days.



Jade, thanks for a really nice day.

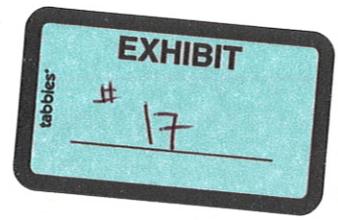
Eagle isn't anonymous. Eagle isn't the Internet. You can't spill vitriolic comments about your neighbors while you stand in line at the coffee shop or attack individuals during a town board meeting and expect people to forget it the next day. It's all very personal because it is all very close.

I am not saying that people shouldn't speak passionately about what they believe. Passion is a critical part of small town politics and people's passion about Eagle is the reason why it is such a great place to live. I just wonder if it is possible to be passionate without being caustic? Can we be critical about issues and still be kind about people?

I'm not always nice. I have said or written some mean things about people. Most of the times those comments felt good in the moment, but when I cooled down, I realized I didn't have to get quite so personal to make my point.

As the Eagle River Station debate begins anew, we have yet another opportunity to be mean to one another. ERS is a controversial proposal and there is plenty to yell about. I hope we don't. I hope we talk to one another instead. I don't think the debate will result in everyone agreeing about the plan, but at the end of the day, if the discussion is a little less toxic, maybe the community will be a bit less damaged.

Wouldn't that be nice?



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