**An Attitude of Cooperation Facilitates Civility**

**Have you been told that you have a good attitude? While when we hear the word “good”, we know that they approve. But with the word “attitude” we are not so sure what they are addressing. You might think that they are referring to one’s positive outlook on life in general or to whatever task you are working on. Perhaps they see you as happy, works hard, follows the rules, or does what they are told with no compliant. But, perhaps there is an even deeper level of attitude- how you approach any interaction with mankind whether individually, with family, in a work environment, with other countries, or in any social event. I am suggesting that kind of attitude is cooperation. Further it is this attitude that will enable us to function always in a civil manner.**

**By definition cooperation is the process of working together to the same end. Wikipedia states that it is the process of groups of organisms working or acting together for common or mutual benefit. Synonyms include collaboration, joint action, combined effort, team work, partnership, coordination, liaison, synergy, give and take, and compromise.**

**The University of Wisconsin Center for Cooperatives says that cooperation is one of the most “in” words today. We hear about cooperation between government, business, universities, government units and other groups that believe they can accomplish more by working with others than they do alone. Another, Sandra Chen in September, 2015 stated that cooperation is important. Everyone has limited time and intellectual resources, so learning how to cooperate with others can boost the efficiency as well as maximize the possibility of competence and success.**

**Much has been written about the positive effects of cooperation in the workplace. The following is a list of examples: success is more likely, open communication, there are less arguments, try to prevent problems, increase in production as workers are spending more time on their job responsibilities, job satisfaction, employees are given a real voice, and less misunderstanding. I agree wholeheartedly that when we have cooperation, all results will be positive, for the employers, the employees, the community, the country, the world.**

 **Then finally the advancement of human society. I have spoken in the past of four cornerstones of civility- courtesy, humility, kindness, and humor, but they need a base or a center to keep them sturdy. This I believe is the attitude of cooperation. You might wonder how cooperation can be our base. Do not we live with a competitive attitude, each of us trying to get the same thing? Some call it survival of the fittest, a dog eat dog world, out for blood. I think not. Sure there are some in this world that do have that base, but time tells us that it is with cooperation that society prospers. With competition if we do not win, we are defeated. All seems lost with only one course of action that of retaliation. This often means that our cornerstones tumble down and any action is acceptable, a lack of connection to others, and the end of civility.**

 **On the other hand with cooperation as our base, we are grounded. This encourages us to do our best and work hard. Success will come along the way. There are times when another does do better and get the success. Still there remains multiple opportunities for our further successes. The cornerstones remain erect. Each of our actions can include those strong cornerstones. We not only remain civil, but civility grows stronger. The more bases of cooperation that exist, there will be less competition. We become fully connected to others.**

**I am very pleased to report to you that here in Door County we have many cooperative bases and they are growing. 2017 brings many opportunities for more individuals, nonprofits, businesses, and government to work together to make our county stronger, healthier, and more prosperous.**

**Welcome to a new year of Civility.**

**Door County Civility Project**

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