

Happy Valentine's Day

This is the time to think and act with love and caring. It seems that we might find some examples in the behavior of other creatures with whom we share this planet. Naturalists, in their studies of geese, report the facts listed below. The "lessons" are added to help direct our thoughts.

FACT: A bird flaps its wings it creates an updraft for those following. By flying in a "V" formation, the group adds 71% greater flying range than if each member flew alone.

LESSON: People who share a common direction and share a sense of community can get where they are going quicker and easier by traveling on the thrust of one another.

FACT: Whenever a goose falls out of formation it suddenly feels drag and resistance of trying to fly alone and quickly gets back into formation to take advantage of the lifting power of the bird immediately in front of it.

LESSON: If we follow this example, we will stay in formation with those who are headed where we want to go and be willing to accept their help as well as giving ours to others.

FACT: When the lead goose gets tired it rotates back into the formation and another flies at the point position.

LESSON: It pays to take turns doing the hard tasks and sharing the leadership. With people as with geese we are interdependent on the skills and capabilities of all our members.

FACT: The geese in formation honk from behind to encourage those in front to keep up their speed.

LESSON: We need to make sure our honking from behind is encouraging. The power of encouragement is an enormously effective tool in promoting healthy relationships and productivity.

FACT: When a goose gets sick, wounded or shot down, two geese follow it out of the formation to give it protection and stay with it until it is able to fly again or dies. They then catch up with the flock or join another.

LESSON: Common sense dictates that we too should stand by each other in difficult times as well as when we are strong.

Perchance these lessons will help each of us to enjoy more fully the warmth and understanding of human love and concern, both as givers and receivers.