

President's Message

By Lisa D. Harbour-Weibel

The month of November has a tendency to bring out the “thankfulness” within oneself. To reflect on this month, the first important date to be thankful for is November 11... Veteran's Day.

Did you take the time to thank a Veteran that you passed by or did you continue to walk on by in your busy life. Many of us have watched the surprise returns and many of us love to watch these with tears and happiness for the random families depicted as their loved ones return home from the military. While watching the videos, have you ever really thought about what it is like to be that family? Maybe you have been the wife/ husband, father/ mother or even a relative awaiting the return of a loved one. Have you had to put your children to bed without the other parent for months on end, or even cook dinner for yourself while wishing your loved one was right across the table from you? Have you ever received the news that a loved one was taken too soon while fighting for their country or patrolling the streets of your neighborhood; as they now leave behind their little ones? If so, my heart goes out to you. I think about this often and find myself more thankful each and every day as I question whether I could be as strong as some of the families every single day.

With the craziness of our government and the strive to succeed as individuals and professionals, sometimes faith and humanity goes by the wayside. However, my faith in humanity was restored a few weeks ago while eating lunch with my mother. As we were standing in line, a World War II veteran was ahead of us in line. A gentlemen rushed up, thanked him for his service, and offered to pay for his meal. This wasn't the only act of kindness that this stranger had paid forward, he then proceeded to ask the gentlemen (who has now informed me that he is 90 years of age and standing upright so life is good) to join him and his wife for lunch. As they enjoyed their lunch, I could overhear the conversation about his past, his life, his loved ones, and of course, his military service. Again, thank you to all the Veterans and everything you do, as I return to my family each and every night, place a meal upon the table as we eat dinner together, and kiss my son goodnight as I lay him to bed.

Here is a Veteran's Day tribute I enjoyed watching from YouTube. I do not own any rights to the music, the pictures or videos that were used to make this tribute. I hope you take the time to watch it and reflect on what the men and women of the military do for us:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QA1GF9dIXJw>

For my second reflection, it is life in general. As I stated earlier, life can be crazy... the desire to succeed can sometimes be crazy, which then leads one to inquire, how do you, as an individual and professional, define success? Do you define it by monetary rewards such as money, gifts, etc... or do you define it as happiness, love and health... or a combination of both? Working in the legal fields gives rise to variety of scenarios that one may never encounter if they didn't work in this profession. I often find myself thankful each day for everything I have after I have completed a day's work. First, I have employment and I'm healthy enough to work. Many individuals are searching for employment as I write this. Second, I am leaving work to head home to my family to cook dinner for us. That sentence means three things: (1) I have a home (2) I have loved ones awaiting for me at home and (3) I have food in my fridge and the ability to

prepare it for my family as we gather around the dinner table in our home. I can reflect on many of my clients that don't have one or all of these three things. Seems pretty standard, but to many, it is not. As I open my hallway closet to figure out which coat I will be wearing for the day, again, this act seems standard but it is not as I watch many individuals at the bus stop outside my office that do not have any outer clothing on. I have since donated many of my coats with the determination that I don't need that many when there is someone that could definitely use it more than I could. At night as I crawl into bed, I often think of my homeless individuals that I see on a daily basis around the office or at court. Did they find shelter for the evening- coats, blanket boxes to provide a little warmth? Did they find something to drink to stay hydrated during the cold night? Did they find food for themselves or their children so that their tummies do not growl from hunger? I am extremely thankful that my child never goes to bed with a hungry tummy, but when you think about those that are barely making it to survive, this happens more often than not.

I could continue to write this section on being thankful for days about the various random thoughts that are in my head. However, I will spare you. I hope as you read this, you began to reflect on yourself and your family along with the things that you are thankful for, along with your success.

I wish you the happiest of Thanksgivings and hope you enjoy this great holiday season!