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The power of the word

By **DEBBI MOORE**
GLCCC CEO/President

My Mom was an avid reader and thus I was raised with a deep appreciation of reading. In fact, in my minister's home we didn't have a television until I was in the 7th grade, so reading was a powerful influencer to me. My parents even created a little "library" for me in the bottom of our linen closet, complete with a little chair and a light. As I remember sitting in my "library", under the glow of my light, the words of those books would transport me and my imagination into special places. Growing up writing, especially poetry became my escape from the world. Writing became place to go when emotions overwhelmed me.

I, like so many of you, were watching the Inauguration



COURTESY PHOTO

Debbi Moore

last week, when this young lady in a beautiful, bright yellow coat with a red hand band stepped into the history books. Amanda Gorman captivated our hearts with her poem. Her elegance in speaking and delivery of such a powerful message took our breath away. We are looking forward to reading more of her poetry in her forthcoming books. Spoken words become

written words which will be read over and over again for generations to come.

Perhaps it was a kindred spirit in the fact that I too react to words, or just curiosity, I began to follow her various interviews. One of the first I interviewed I watched, in a response to the conversation regarding where Amanda finds inspiration for her poetry, she so eloquently responded that she is moved and inspired by words. She continued by saying, "we must reclaim words."

These two words, "reclaim words" resonated with me, particularly in light of the shared experiences of the last year. Words can be uplifting, gentle & full of joy or they can be depilating, negative and mean. The choice of words we use is ours. And yet again, how we put together our words, deliver

our words can make the difference. My beloved husband used to tell me, "It's not what you say, it's how you say it." So I challenge us all today to "reclaim words."

As we have watched the normalcy of our lives be absolutely upended and tossed us all into a world of uncertainty, I challenge all us to reclaim words. Words of kindness. Words of gentleness. Words of positivity. Words of peace. Words of compassion. Words of Understanding. And as we begin this month of love, I would be remiss if I didn't mention words of love. I challenge all us to find the words that make the most positive impact in someone's life. Whether you speak words, or like me write down in thoughts or poetry,

See MOORE | 2



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FROM THE CHAIR

Bataan 2021 to be a virtual event

The 32nd annual Bataan Memorial Death March will be hosted virtually for the first time in event history. Marchers will be able to participate anytime between April 9 and April 18, 2021.

The decision by White Sands Missile Range to host the event virtually allows leadership to keep COVID safety the top priority for participants, volunteers, staff and community supporters. It also gives participants the flexibility to choose a date and route that works best for them, while honoring the memory of World War II heroes.

On April 9, 1942 tens of thousands of American and Filipino soldiers were surrendered to Japanese forces and were forced to march more than 60 miles in the scorching heat through the Philippine jungles. Thousands died and those who survived faced the hardships of prisoner of war camps.

The Bataan Memorial Death March is a challenging and grueling march that tests both mental and physical abilities. For the 2021 virtual experience, marchers are encouraged to choose a challenging stretch of road or trail in honor of the historical march. Marchers can choose between the full 26.2 mile marathon length or a 14.2 mile honorary distance.

The March officially kicks off on April 9, 2021, and participants may choose any day between April 9 and April 18, 2021 to complete their mileage. The March must be completed in one day. Returning marchers will find they will only need to



select their distance for the 2021 March, as multiple categories are not necessary in a virtual environment. Event organizers still encourage participants to march in their own way, to include in uniform or with a "ruck" if desired and safe.

The registration fee includes a Bataan Marcher T-Shirt, Marcher Bib, Commemorative Dog Tag, and a Participation Medal. As with all virtual fitness events, the March is based on the honor system. Event organizers will not be tracking finishing times, instead focusing on the memorial aspect of the event.

More details on the opening date for registration and pricing will be announced soon via website and social media. Please follow the Bataan Memorial Death March Facebook page and www.bataanmarch.com for future announcements.

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THE LAS CRUCES **Bulletin**

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reclaiming words can be catalysts to move us to continue navigate this unexpected journey.

Last month I spoke of making echoes for those following in our footsteps. Our words, things we say, things we write down also create echoes. Thank you, Amanda Gorman, for sharing your heart, your passion, your words...you have touched, and will continue to touch so many!

the bottom line

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GREATER LAS CRUCES CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

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Love and kindness are always in fashion

February is the month of love and kindness. As I reflect on the start of the year, I can't help but think about the Ambassadors' annual event - Las Cruces Day In Santa Fe. A weekend filled with love for our Southern New Mexico community and delegation in Santa Fe.

The annual event hosts networking receptions and policy information meetings. There is ample time to meet with the Southern New Mexico delegates and with other legislators from around the state. The event always left me feeling re-

juvenated and with more ideas than I think I could accomplish. Most importantly, being at Las Cruces Day In Santa Fe made me feel proud of our Southern New Mexico community. Seeing business leaders, legislators, and fellow Ambassadors in Santa Fe all advocating for legislation near and dear to them was encouraging, and I'd get back to Las Cruces ready



to get to work.

This year is a little different, considering the ongoing pandemic. While our annual Las Cruces Day In Santa Fe event isn't happening, I feel a lot of love and work going into the year's first legislative session. I encourage our business community to make connections with their legislators and advocate for what you believe in. I've also been reflect-

ing on kindness and what it means to be kind. You probably understand that kindness is more than niceties for anyone who has been in a leadership position. Being kind is sometimes about making the hard decisions or having the hard conversations. Maybe removing someone from a job, or re-assigning them, while it's difficult, may be the kindest thing anyone has ever done for them.

Kindness is the act of consideration. Consideration for wellbeing, for the future, for health, or

friendship. It's about moments in your day like checking in on someone, realizing someone's potential - even if they don't see it in themselves. Kindness is reviewing work to help another improve, stopping to help someone who has car trouble or even giving yourself some grace over your own decisions.

Love and kindness take many forms in our day-to-day activities, leadership, parenting, or friendship. Like many things love and kindness can be difficult, but love and kindness can also be straightforward.



CAROLINE ZAMORA

Chair of the Greater Las Cruces Chamber of Commerce Ambassadors

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