

Barry Densa: It must be hope that was missing

By Barry Densa
Community Crank columnist
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Nearly every Sunday morning for the past two years, my wife and I played tennis with our friends, Rick and Linda. This past August we spent a long, fun weekend with them in Key West, where, what else, we played tennis.

We've been to their house for parties and dinner numerous times, and they to ours, where we talked about, yup, tennis.

Clearly, we're all tennis fanatics, and it's no surprise that we became close and good friends.

A few days before Christmas Richard "Rick" Healey shot and killed Linda and then killed himself at their Hobe Sound home.

Why?

Shake your heads and search the hidden recesses of unimaginable thoughts. The quick and easy answers are all there: marital discord, jealousy, insecurity, blind insanity. But the true answer will never be known.

Then there's the other haunting question: Why didn't we see it coming?

Did Rick ever make a "cry for help" that we missed? Was there an odd turn of a phrase, a frown, an empty stare at a telling time — anything that we should've caught, but didn't?

Did Linda ever joke about their relationship in a way that should've prompted concern, but we ignored it instead?

During the week of Christmas and the approach of New Year's Eve, with the ever-increasing commotions and celebrations, and the still overpowering sad and quiet moments, I nonetheless found an answer to another "why?"

Not why some live and others die? Not why we're put on this earth? Not why kindness is not always repaid, why genius and talent are not always recognized, why peace and happiness are sometimes so hard to come by?

I found the answer to why we continue to go on. Why we always look forward to another new year; welcoming it at parties with song, or in the quiet safety of our home, or in the unnoticed hours after we've gone to sleep.

Very few of us live a life devoid of mistakes and regrets, missed and squandered opportunities, and just bad luck. Some of us even make the same stupid mistakes twice, three times, or more.

Divorce and death share this world with marriage and birth. Rape and murder, theft and disaster cannot deny the bounty of love and giving, charity and kindness that will always be found if only we look.

Why do we go on? Because we choose to, because we can — because we have hope — because even with the mysteries of life and death unanswered, and given what little we may have to work with, each new year renews our belief that this year we can make our lives richer and happier.

As nothing in this world is perfect, then so too can everything in this world be made better.

Upon the memory of all who were unavoidably destined or driven uncontrollably to leave us too soon, I wish you, friend and stranger alike, the hope and the strength that will take you to a better, prosperous, healthier, happier and beautiful New Year.