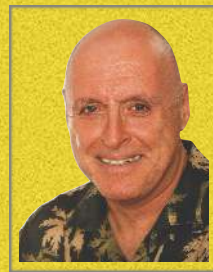


THE EXTRA POINT

BY JERRY ROBERTS



573 Carl Gutierrez Now the One at GVB

Dinah Washington hit the record charts in 1959 with *What a Difference a Day Makes*. I'm Jerry Roberts and you could forgive Gov. Lou Leon Guerrero if she's humming that tune this morning. Let's see if we can make some music, next on The Extra Point.

The last couple of months have been rocky for the Leon Guerrero-Tenorio administration. While trying to lead the effort to fight the virus, there have been charges of questionable procurement practices; paying all GovGuam employees, even if not on the job, while the private sector was ordered shut down and its workers have suffered; overdue stimulus checks which are finally coming out; and a dustup with local media that left the administration forced to issue hasty apologies.

Two days ago, as she was discussing the move to the second stage of Guam's reopening and recovery plan, the governor also commented that she's been bothered by the divisiveness and mean spirited personal attacks that have been directed toward her and her team on Facebook.

Many Guam companies have restarted their operations, but things are going slow and a large percentage of workers are still sitting home. Some businesses are gone, never to come back. There's federal relief and that will help, but the private sector's pulse is faint, and the visitor industry is on a prolonged "time out."

The governor and her team should receive credit along with the sacrifices of Guam's people, for keeping a lid on the number of COVID-19 infections. The lockdown wasn't popular but it did the job. Still, there hasn't been a lot of good news.

Then came yesterday with the governor announcing that former governor Carl Gutierrez would be tabbed as acting head of the Guam Visitors' Bureau, until a replacement

is found for the retiring Pilar Laguana. Indeed, what a difference a day makes. You could feel the energy change, and I was at home, watching on Facebook.

There has been a surge of posts that "the sunshine is back," and that Gutierrez is "still the one." Some of those posts and comments were made by Republicans. Why would that be? Because Gutierrez has already essentially done the job he has just been hired to do.

Becoming governor in 1995 he inherited a Government of Guam that was nearly broke and the economy was stagnant. He reached out to the business community, including top leaders in tourism, bringing in people he knew hadn't supported him in the election. Together they built a public-private partnership that helped push Gutierrez's Vision 2001 program and revived the island's economy.

In his time as governor he managed several events that hurt Guam's visitor industry — typhoons, financial downturns, and the Korean Airlines crash. He understands how to lead in a crisis.

Lou Leon Guerrero has put the bat in the hands of a man who isn't afraid of a challenge, even one as big as what we face now.

At the announcement he gave a short comment that came right out of his playbook from 1995, that his intent was to again bring in the private sector to help the government rebuild the economy. He is also enlisting help from some of the team members who were a part of the Vision 2001 effort.

Gutierrez respects people with talent, know-how, and drive, and he lets them do what they do best. He sees the big picture, while possessing a remarkable memory for details.

(Con't.)



He also knows how government works. Add to all that a level of energy that a far younger man would be glad to have.

One more thing. Carl Gutierrez can swing for the fences without any worry of striking out. His term is for 90 days but I wouldn't be surprised if that gets extended.

In that 90 days if no tourists come to Guam, it will be because they weren't ready to travel, perhaps in conjunction with a worry that Guam wasn't ready to accept visitors. On the other hand, if people from Taiwan and perhaps South Korea begin to make bookings, it's a good win.

Another bit of credit for the current governor. Carl Gutierrez commands a room like no other local politician can. He has charisma, endless confidence, and knows how to effectively deal with media. Many leaders would be threatened by someone who could potentially overshadow them, and thus wouldn't put them in such a prominent role. That she has speaks well of Lou Leon Guerrero.

If you're in a leadership role or someday want to be, remember the lesson. Find talented people who can face off with adversity and make decisions; then give them the tools and the freedom to do what they do best. It's the recipe for generating the results you want.

That's The Extra Point. Be responsible and make something good happen today. For 93.3 and the Ray Gibson Show, I'm Jerry Roberts.

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