

Our City

From the outside looking in it may have appeared to be a pretty slow week in our fair city. On the inside though, the wheels were turning. There are few programs in our community that are as successful as Organized Recreation. In the winter it takes on two versions: one for our youth, and an adult league. The youth basketball league (K-3) is bursting at the seams with over 140 kids participating in the basketball program. To the volunteer coaches I thank you for your efforts to make participation possible for so many. The adult volleyball league is booming too; and many members of varying ages are playing and burning off some winter steam.

If the past few weeks are any indication, it looks like we might have a real old fashioned winter this year, which would be a welcome reprieve for our farmers and others dependent on snow pack and a dependable water supply. However; as I get late night or early morning phone calls and sign time sheets from our street department with lots of overtime on them, it does have a price on this end of the calendar too. Nonetheless, I am all too happy to sign the timesheets, answer the phone calls and believe it or not I actually enjoy shoveling my walks. To all those who contribute to making travel safer for all of us, I thank you. From those who help the elderly with their walks, to those who volunteer their four-wheeler with a plow attachment, to yet others with trucks and plows and finally to our city, county and state employees who do the very best they can to make our streets and roads passable and come to our rescue when things go bad, again I say thank you for your service. As you travel over the next week or so, please be safe. The most important thing is that you get there in one piece, safe and sound.

The pieces and parts that will allow us to refit the City's waste water treatment plant have finally arrived. Final engineering and installation schematics are in the works and shortly after the first of the year the new blower should be installed in the processing basins, allowing for the better management of dissolved oxygen in the treatment process and making the overall care and operations at the plant much simpler, more efficient and cost effective. The ultraviolet treatment system should be online at about the same time. While maintenance is ongoing, the conclusion of these final two projects will be a very welcome Christmas present in the waste water department even though it will be a month late. I for one am anxious to see the results. It's not unlike a small child having to wait to unwrap that one present they've been awaiting for over a year.

Of course the very best presents are those you never see coming and wouldn't normally expect. I received one of those yesterday. It brought warmth to my heart and a tear to my eye. I think too often we associate this season with the giving of "things." Whether you believe in God or a higher being or not, I do not believe that the giving of things exemplifies the true spirit of giving, it's too commercial. I associate the spirit of giving as giving of one's self. Admittedly, I don't do it as much as I should. The gift I received yesterday was delivered by a young lady who apparently, in my teacher role, I had made a difference for. The letter she gave me was heartfelt, eloquent and I would have to say elegant. She had tears in her eyes when she gave it to me; and I had them in mine as I read it.

In this life sometimes it's hard to know whose life you will touch and in what way. But I believe we should all do our part, whatever that part is. After receiving and reading the letter, I

thought about what I was feeling; and to tell you the truth it felt really good to be me. I took that feeling, wrote a few words and passed it on to someone who had made a real difference in my life and who I believe tries every day to make the lives around her better. Who she is is not important here, although she is not family. What she sent me back later made me feel good too.

As this is the season of giving I would ask you to try it. Pay it forward. Tell someone who is not expecting it that they made a difference. See what happens to them, feel what happens to you.

Merry Christmas one and all...