

THE POORE PAGE

November- December

This is one of my most favorite times of the years. I love the holidays. I like the smell of them (the smell of a Christmas tree and the smell of baked goods), I like the sounds of the season (everything from Burl Ives to Dean Martin to Baby Face), and I really like the lights. Of course what I love most is the spirit of giving.

Now when you think about giving, we normally put that in the context of presents to friends and family. Nothing wrong with that and I am quite the kid when it comes to getting a present. However, what I really want to concentrate on is the amazing reality that exists in this community to give to others. I have seen some pretty neat things happen during these first few weeks of the holiday season.

A great example to start with was the banquet-celebration that was held for the Circle of Life . What a treasure to this community to have a quality Hospice program that will serve anyone, anyone, anyone. I use this last word three times for emphasis, because that is exactly my take away from the event. How is this possible? By the generosity of this community there are resources to support families who are dealing with loved ones who need the support of Hospice care. The banquet was a great exhibit of how this community will give to support others.

I was also touched just this past week by a breakfast to support the North West Arkansas Court Appointed Special Advocate Association (CASA). Again, the community showed up to attend a breakfast and commit financially to support the youth of our community who need an advocate to support them when they are dealing with challenging issues often presented because of the lack of attention from adults. This organization has grown tremendously and as a result, support for children who need it most is being addressed. However, there are still many kids in need and if you have a heart for kids, you really need to check out their web site and get involved. Make a financial commitment or better yet, see how you can volunteer. It will change your life and it will change the life of a kid.

I would be remiss if I did not bring up the service organization that I am involved with. The Rotarians are all about giving and all about service. Right now another snack pack effort is underway to help families who sometimes do not have the resources to support their young ones nutritionally. I wish you all could see the truck-trailers of food that is donated quarterly by Rotarians. It is way cool. Naturally, there are numerous other service organizations in this community. Why not make a pledge this holiday to join one of these service organizations and join others to impact our community in a positive way? The best part about these service organizations is that they all have a goal to support our young people. What a great investment.

Finally, I applaud this paper. Since the 1970's, the Benton County Daily Record has conducted its Christmas Card program. I ask that each of you consider giving to this fund during the holiday season. Support provided goes directly to helping families. Donation amounts are dependent on your own situation but you can designate where you would like your donation to have an impact. Please share that you would like to support the Bentonville community. Many people do not realize how our community has changed. Do you realize that our schools now have over 30% of our students receiving free and reduced lunches? This number has doubled in just a little over a decade.

I am thankful to live in a community such as ours. We have a newspaper that stands tall in helping us support and give to the neediest. We have service organizations whose sole purpose is to give back to our community. We have wonderful organizations like Circle of Life and CASA who operate to support families in need. Northwest Arkansas is such a great place. I hope we all take stock during this holiday of the blessings of living in Bentonville.