

Opinion: Volunteers make Louisburg a great place



Just as a warning before going forward, this article is full of bias and might be one of the most homerish (if that is a word) pieces I have written.

So, now that I have gotten that out of the way, here it goes. Before starting Louisburg Sports Zone last February, I already knew Louisburg was a great place to live and raise a family.

It became more evident when I lost my job and started out on my own that Louisburg was truly the place for me. Why would I want to go anywhere else?

The support I have received, which I have written about before, has been a blessing and it is something I simply cannot repay. Business is great and I am very excited for what the next school year has in store.

However, this summer also provided me a different perspective on why small towns are the best places to live. It is pretty simple – volunteers.

Those are people who sacrifice their time with their families so that programs can be made available for their children to participate. It is a thankless job and one that usually is filled with countless complaints from people who – let's be honest – haven't volunteered their time and talents much in their life.

This summer gave me the opportunity to cover many different events from high school camps, Louisburg Area Recreation Association (LARA) activities and the Louisburg Barracudas swim team – among others. What makes most of these things work is the support of volunteers.

LARA is a non-profit organization completely made up of volunteers. Whether it is flag football, basketball, baseball or softball, they do their best to provide the best possible experience for your child.

Living in Louisburg as long as I have, I also know LARA doesn't have the best reputation in the community for one reason or another. For that reason, it has been an uphill climb for this group to earn back the community's trust.

The people with LARA, Heather Burch, Cindy Apple, Shava Vohs, Kalee Smith, Lori Driskell, Molly Strubbe, Ashley Buset, Steve Mungle and Tony Page, actually care about this community and these kids. If they didn't, there is no way they would be donating all their time and energy to the cause.

Listen, I know at times things didn't always go perfectly with one event or another, but nothing can ever be perfect and these volunteers are doing the best they can with what they have. In a perfect world, LARA would be a city-run organization that doesn't rely strictly on volunteers.

For now, residents should be happy that people with big hearts are doing everything they can with your child's best interest in mind.

Then you have the Louisburg Barracudas swim team, which to me, is really a hidden jewel within the community. I guess it can't really be a hidden jewel when so many people know about it, but I don't think it is talked about a lot because swimming isn't as big of a sport here as others.

What the Barracudas offer are second-to-none in the area.

Louisburg residents Kyle and Aimee Farrington are fantastic coaches who give great instructions from toddlers on up through high school. Along with having a competitive environment, it also gives children a chance to get used to the water and learn how to swim, which is a great tool for them to have.

Just like LARA, it couldn't happen without the help of a countless number of volunteers. Whether it's the numerous people who serve on the board, or the parents who help run the meets, it couldn't be accomplished without their help.

Then you see the amazing accomplishment of the Louisburg Soccer Club and parents from around the community who raised \$39,000 in about 10 months to help form the Louisburg High School girls soccer team that will begin play this coming spring.

No one on that committee got paid for doing this, but people like Karin Olson, Diana Moore and others helped make this possible. All of these people have full-time jobs, and a lot of the committee members used up whatever free time they had left in their lives to make this a possibility for girls young and old in Louisburg.

Year in, and year out, the Louisburg Soccer Club and its volunteers do a fantastic job of putting together their fall and spring seasons and the club has grown a great deal in the last few years.

The same goes for the Louisburg Kids Wrestling Club as coach Matt Blancarte and high school coach Bobby Bovaird also spend a great deal of time trying to get the program to grow and provide a positive outlook for the wrestlers.

These are only a few of the organizations that give up their time to make our kids' lives better. There are many other organizations that are non-sports related that do the exact same thing and their efforts shouldn't go without our thanks

THANK YOU to everyone who help make these programs possible for our children, because without you our town would be a little less livable.