

**Conversation with the Mayor - 3 October 2011**  
**Vicky Daly**

**Doing it the Old Fashioned Way**

More years ago than I choose to reveal, my husband and I were part of an audience made up of parents of incoming college freshmen. After extolling the virtues of what was and remains an outstanding school, its representative went on to justify the cost to the family of having our sons and daughters attend and, presumably four years later, to be able to claim it as their alma mater. He told us that the education they acquired there would make them 'rich beyond all dreams of avarice'. That startled me at the time and although our son has done well, the promise was not kept.

That meeting has come to mind several times lately after hearing/ reading about the array of promises being made in this run up to the election some 14 very long months from now. Anyone who has attained the age of reason, pegged at seven, has to know that our future is very much in our own hands - working together, with what we have to work with in this moment in this place, building on what has gone before. We do have the building blocks, we just have to recognize them and move forward.

The Palmyra Community Center is a splendid example of that approach with a wonderful result. Built, stage by stage, through the hard work and generosity of the people of Palmyra and the region, the PCC has grown and developed as a model for other communities. It has become one of Palmyra's greatest assets for people of all ages. (Dan Thomas, who was an integral part of the Community Center, sadly is no longer with us, but his imprint remains.)

So what can we do and how can we do it? Many good things are happening right now. None is large, but all contribute to the critical mass. The Village and Town of Palmyra collaborate in many ways and are always looking for additional ways to do so. Our merchants collaborate, referring customers to each other and sharing advertising space and cost. New merchants find collegial support. Local residents keep those businesses vital by patronizing them. Volunteer organizations help keep us pretty by adopting areas for trash pickup. Individuals are doing the same as they take their morning walks. Neighbors look out for each other clearing sidewalks in bad weather and keeping an eye on their homes when the owners are not in residence. Dog walkers keep their canine companions on leash and pick up after them. Dog owners make an effort to quiet barking pups. Residents add to the neighborhood appearance by keeping lawns and bushes trimmed and by planting flowers. Pal-Mac students are involved with local charity efforts. Pal-Mac Lyons, Kiwanis, and Rotary Clubs respond to local needs with hands on and/or financial assistance. People who live here help them do that by supporting their efforts. Folks also support fundraising efforts by the library, Humane Society, Palmyra Fire Company, Legion and VFW, churches and other local groups.

I could go on at length but the theme should be clear. The making of a better, more prosperous, and even more attractive community is our responsibility. No outside agency can do that for us. Palmyra is basically just people who happen to reside in a pretty little community. The future of that community is ours to make as we would have it.