

## Conversation with the Mayor February 18, 2008

Vicky Daly

### A Point of View

In another life, I worked with school personnel - administrators, teachers, paraprofessionals, lunchroom ladies, bus drivers, virtually everyone, to help us collectively do a better job for the students with whom we worked. It was a great job, in part, because the supervisors for whom I worked were realistic, but upbeat and optimistic. They saw the glass as half full. I like to think that's what I see as well.

The workshops I conducted could range from an hour or two to multi-day trainings over weeks or months. Sometimes, with the latter, after coming together after an extended period, we would ease in to being a group again with a question like 'What good things have happened in your life since last we met?' Too often the response was 'none'. I learned that people were thinking in terms of major vacations, winning the lottery, or finding oil in the backyard. Their glasses were all half empty. Fortunately others spoke of a letter from a friend, an unexpected visit, a book or movie to stimulate conversation, or losing 2 pounds.

It pleases me now, in this life, to work with people who see the glass as half full, who take pleasure in accomplishments that, in the overall scheme of things, aren't momentous. Several of us felt that last week when the draft of a grant application was hand delivered to the DOT office on Jefferson Road by Christine Roets, Director of Transportation for the Pal-Mac CSD. The creation of that draft was the work of a small, energized group that saw the opportunity, however slim, to obtain grant money through the SRTS ( Safe Routes to School) Program. The project is a collaboration between the School District and the Village of Palmyra. Specifically, the committee ( not formal enough to even have a name ) consisted of Superintendent Dr. Robert Ike; Palmyra Elementary Principal Kevin Austin; Christine Roets; Mary Lee Barbeau, Wayne County Cooperative Extension; Trustee Chris Piccola; Highway Superintendent Mike Boesel; Buildings & Grounds Superintendent Gary Hopkins; editor and proofreader Dick Kirchoff, and your mayor - an excellent and impressive group. The deadline for submission is not until April 1<sup>st</sup>. but we were given the opportunity to have the draft reviewed and so we set February 15th as our deadline - and we met it.

Whether we get any funding, and we may not because there isn't that much money and the area it covers is large, it was a good effort. The collaboration itself was positive and pleasant, a base on which to build. In the process we learned things including that work we had done earlier in other efforts was of benefit to this project. If it turns out to be productive and beneficial to our kids, so much the better. Looking and moving forward, realistically but optimistically, is how we as a community will not only survive but prosper.

We are fortunate that our canal neighbors hold the same view. The 'Fifteen Miles on the Erie Canal' project being undertaken by our neighbors to the east is a great example. Working together, the Towns of Arcadia, Lyons and Galen, and the Villages of Newark, Lyons and Clyde are looking to creating a canal trail of canal artifacts from Newark east. There is also an enthusiasm to spread Mural Mania as part of that endeavor. We already have a trail, done years ago because the Village was looking forward. We already have a mural for the same reason. Nonetheless, we will support the 'Fifteen Miles' effort by displaying their brochures and promoting their events, because what is good for Eastern Wayne County is good for all of Wayne County and the region. It's called synergy - and being a Good Neighbor.