

## FROM THE MAYOR'S DESK

DECEMBER 2020

The year of no fun continues. Next dilemma, trees to be cut down from the derecho. After having the trees in the parks and along the streets evaluated by professional arborists, then being told state code prohibits the city from working out agreements with homeowners to try to save the trees in front of their property, the city will hire a tree service to remove or trim trees. At this point, there are over 100 trees that need to be removed. This will make an already damaged landscape look even more barren.

Not too many years ago, driving down the streets of Shellsburg was a shady, and at times of the year, a beautiful colorful drive. As time passed, the trees aged and one by one started to disappear. There were gaps, but many streets were still at least partially shaded, until August 10, 2020. What a shame to see what we have now. How do we get that calm, shaded feeling back? We might not be able to totally, but if we don't get started, it will never happen. Let's try.

Please remember trees are not to be planted on the city side of the sidewalk or in the right of way in front of your home without special permission from the council. This is due to the many underground utilities in many parts of town. Be safe, call One Call before you dig. Please make a plan to plant some shade for the future.

This leads me into something I've been thinking about. Today our society is so fast paced. If the page on Google doesn't come up instantly, we're calling it names. If our drive-through sandwich isn't handed to us in a couple minutes, we're considering driving off. If the traffic isn't going 9.9 over the limit, we are asking if grandpa escaped from the retirement home. OK; that might be just me, but you get my point. We use text, Twitter, FacetTme, Facebook or some other kind of social media to talk to everybody. But are we really talking? Are we so busy we forget to look ahead, to plan, to give? Talking about planting trees made me think of this. I've heard it over and over: "I won't get any use out of planting a tree." Sad! If your grandparents thought that way, there would be no trees ...or maybe you. In fact, they did everything with a thought to making things better for you. Not just trees, but even conversations were used to teach us how to make life better for us and the future. Do we think that way today? Do we actually talk?

When was the last time you sat down with your kids, or better yet, your grandkids and told them a story. Maybe something from your past or about your family or about the community right here. I know teenagers are hard to talk to, so you have to catch them young, and if you do, you might just catch the teens eavesdropping. All kids want to know more about you, their history and surroundings. After all, some of the things crazy you've been through are worth a laugh, or maybe a tear, but in the end, a good story will bring you closer. Closer is the best thing ever. Not a storyteller? Maybe for practice you could get started with someone else's story, the Christmas story. It's found in the Bible, Matthew Chapter 1 Verse 18 through Chapter 2 Verse 12. It's a great story and after that story you could talk about what that means to you.

Have a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year!

As always, thank you for your time.

Lonnie