

National Good Neighbor Day approaches

By Linda Wilk

I have never really thought about the architecture of porches until a recent conversation with Marion Police Chief Angela Haley.

Chief Haley talked about how important porches are for neighborhoods and how when architects changed how houses were built, some of the safety of neighborhoods was lost.

In my neighborhood, porches and porch swings are fairly common and I know I love sitting on my front porch, watching traffic and pedestrians go by as I read a book or just lounge in my swing.



A SLICE OF LIFE

Linda Wilk



I did not really think about the fact that many porches are only big enough to keep you out of the rain as you unlock your front door to get into your

house.

Or the fact that many people now days have large back yards with six-foot fences that do not lend themselves to neighbors getting to know neighbors.

I remember my mom being distressed when new neighbors in her cul de sac neighborhood moved in and put up fences in their back yards. Not only did she not have a large front porch, her back porch and openness in her back yard was disrupted. She took it as a personal message that her neighbors did not want to get to know her.

As I grew up, my mom always knew all her neighbors and delighted in being able to walk in the back yard of other's yards to have a chat while doing laundry or watering the yard.

How things have changed over the years.

Which in part I am sure was the thinking behind the annual holiday first proclaimed by President

Jimmy Carter in 1978. Mrs. Becky Mattson from Lakeside, Montana came up with the idea of a national holiday recognizing the importance of good neighbors in 1971. In 1978, U.S. President Jimmy Carter announced the creation of a national day aimed at raising public awareness that good neighbors help achieve human understanding and build strong, thriving communities.

We are very blessed in our neighborhood because we have long term neighbors intermixed with newcomers to the block.

Over the years as our three girls grew up, our neighbors Truman and Linda were there Indiana grandparents as both my and Larry's parents live several hundred miles away.

While we never tried to rely too heavily on our neighbors, we did know and still know that if there is ever a need, we can turn to our neighbors for help.

In turn, we also try to be

available to our neighbors to assist them whenever possible.

Over the years, we also have the holiday tradition of baking all kinds of candies and cookies that we then deliver to our neighbors. It is a blessing for us and hopefully the neighbors. I know some say they look forward to the peanut butter balls we make.

There are also the times we would go away for the holidays and our neighbors would keep an eye on our house or take in our mail.

Good neighbors are irreplaceable.

They make a block full of houses, a warm and cozy place to live.

So, as Sept. 28 is set aside to celebrate National Good Neighbor Day, I would encourage all to get outside and make a point of waving at a neighbor, smiling at a neighbor or talking to a neighbor.

Not only will it brighten someone's day, it just may help decrease the amount of

mischief and violence taking place in your neighborhood which benefits all.

Since then, National Good Neighbor Day has been acknowledged by various levels of government and is celebrated every year. The holiday was originally celebrated on the fourth Sunday in September, but in 2003 its date was changed to September 28. On this day, Nextdoor.com, a social network for neighborhoods, announces the recipients of Nextdoor's Good Neighbor Award. Everyone can nominate a neighbor or a group of neighbors by writing a short story about what they have done to help their local community and make it a better place.

National Good Neighbor Day is the perfect occasion to honor the people who make significant contributions to creating safer neighborhoods and stronger communities across the United States.

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move the Growth Council to the next stage."

Essentially, the target industry analysis allowed the Growth Council to see where they could improve, and how they could better meet the needs of current employers and potential investors. Bailey's role will be directly linked to the analysis, helping businesses, both present and potential, see the advantages of operating in Grant County, which includes location, higher edu-

cation, and lower cost of living. Additionally, she will work to find the best ways to train the work force to keep talented people in the area, as well as be an advocate for both small and large businesses.

"I am very confident [in her,]" Eckerle said. "I think she brings a variety of talents, skills, and maturity. We think she will do marvelous. Her performance level has always been exemplary."

She and Eckerle will handle things jointly, working in collaboration with other organizations to help lead Grant County into the future.

"I never saw it coming, but it's exciting," Bailey said. "It feels good to be back. I just hope to continue the work that has already gone on here. I really want to focus on what's next... being a resource, and having a collaborative mindset."

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