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Neighborhood Improvement People

A column by Mayor Harry Tutunjian

Ronald Reagan once said “Each generation goes further than the generation preceding it because it stands on the shoulders of that generation. You will have opportunities beyond anything we've ever known”. Working to make Troy a better place for the generations after them are our city's neighborhood associations.

From North Lansingburgh to South Troy and from Downtown to the Eastside, there are groups of people making positive impacts in their community. The people that populate these groups have taken it upon themselves to live President Reagan’s words in their community by going further and doing more to improve their neighborhood.

Government on any level can only go so far in its ability to affect change and respond to constituent needs. It is when citizens partner with the city government to help bring issues to our attention, develop solutions in a cooperative spirit, and implement a plan of action that progress can occur. The level of importance on this process is integral to a city that functions smoothly.

That is why our city website has a link for “Neighborhoods” featured right on the main page. We are aware of the weight and influence active members of the community have upon members of the neighborhoods who might feel at a loss for affecting change in their area. We want to foster participation and involvement.

A prime example is what’s been happening on 6th Ave in North Central Troy. There have been some issues with kids of various ages – but mainly teenagers – congregating at various spots. As they walk their neighborhood, they become larger and more aggressive until one night recently there were enough of them for a mini-riot to occur. The police showed up and made arrests but the damage to the community’s ego was done.

Or so you might think.

In the aftermath of this unfortunate situation community members - led by Nina Glandz and Tina Urzan - banded together and organized an emergency meeting of the North Central Neighborhood Association. There, they confronted the problem directly, aired some frustrations and started a dialogue that otherwise might’ve been bottled up only to ignite at later time.

On the other end of the spectrum, you have Marion Field and Tony Defiglio from Troy Little Italy. In partnership with Weed and Seed Program Director, Troy Police Officer Colleen Goldston and Coordinator Heather Hamlin, they were able to secure funding from grants that allowed them to resurrect a park that had lost

its sheen. Now it's been spruced up and polished. It's a place that brings kids and families to swing, slide, and barbeque.

Finally, the National Night Out last Tuesday was an invigorating display of community strength. As I've said before, a major reason crime and neighborhood deterioration occurs is due to the invidious spread of apathy. Yet, I marched from School 12 to the Little Italy Marketplace with some of the most empathetic citizens and we sent a message to those who think they can continue on with business as usual that they never were and no longer are welcome.

On any given night there are meetings across the city and I do my best to attend them. I care about our city and its neighborhoods. If there is something you'd like me to attend, please let me know. You can email MayorsOffice@troyny.gov any time to let us know your thoughts or what's happening in your neighborhood.

After all, standing on the shoulders of the previous generation means we can see the responsibility we have to maintain the city's improvements for future generations.

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