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I recently sat across the table in my office from the pastor of a local Murray congregation. As we introduced ourselves and learned a little more about each other, I quickly discovered that this gentleman had dedicated a good portion of his life in serving others in various capacities. The cynic inside of me was anticipating the moment when the request would come. What favor or consideration would I be asked to provide by the city? No such request came. Rather, the question, “what can we do for the city?” I’ll admit that I was a little ashamed of myself for my cynicism. As we discussed a number of common concerns, my thoughts shifted to gratitude for the many members of our community who work hard and volunteer their time and talents to others in many different capacities.

I’m amazed by the number of hours that are donated by our community members on behalf of our citizens. Our Murray Senior Recreation Center is largely dependent on the hundreds of hours of volunteer service for their many programs, including ceramics, computer classes, lunch hosting, bingo, van drivers, recreation programs, special events, and so many more. Our Parks and Recreation programs also rely heavily on volunteers to coach the teams in our sports leagues that provide the opportunity for our young people to get out and participate in the recreation programs of their choice.

Our city also relies heavily on the volunteer efforts of our twelve advisory boards and commissions. Approximately 60 citizens unselfishly give many hours of their time serving on these boards without compensation.



Of course, we can't overlook those who dedicate many of their own hours volunteering in our schools as an investment in future leaders, scientists, engineers, business leaders, teachers, and so forth. Many volunteer hours are also invested in our Boys and Girls Club in their effort to support the children in our community, again investing in the future. On Saturday, April 21, I had the privilege of joining about 200 volunteers for the "Comcast Cares Day" at the Murray club. The enthusiastic volunteers cleaned, painted, cleared weeds, hauled debris, and whatever else needed to be done, all with big smiles! Their "pay" was pizza, a t-shirt, and the satisfaction of helping a good cause.

There are numerous other organized volunteer groups, such as the Exchange Club, Rotary Club, and various religious organizations. All of which consist of people who are willing to sacrifice their time, efforts and finances to making our community a better place.

The late author Elizabeth Andrews once wrote, "Volunteers do not necessarily have the time; they just have the heart." I am so appreciative of all of you who have the heart, and give your time to make things better for others. Whenever I'm tempted to become cynical, I just have to reflect on the great members of our community, and I quickly become humble and grateful.