

Logan Lien, Greenfield Township, Wabasha County

There is a popular slogan that townships could use; "Like a good neighbor, your township is there." This really sums up what I think townships are about, being good neighbors who are there when you need them. Townships are individual communities with unique personalities and strengths and issues.

For me, it's important to be a part of a community. Being a part of a community and township gives a sense of security and makes it a more fun place to live. People gain great trust and respect for each other when they know their community members. At a young age, I was my neighborhood's dog babysitter, dog walker and yard helper. After having my own lawn care service for three years, I have gotten to know a lot of neighbors and township people. I know I can count on my neighbors AND they can count on me.

My first introduction to township government was in 5th grade when my 4-H club decided to promote election voting. Our club found the township boundaries on a map and we put the signs at busy intersections. This was the first time I realized that townships were a local form of government. Now I have a much better understanding of all the work townships do for the residents. This winter was a great example of how much we count on townships to keep our roads open and maintained. I have also signed up for the student election judge training and am scheduled to work as a ballot judge at our township primary and general election. This will be an opportunity to learn even more about township government.

I think of townships as the original community neighborhood. Townships were established in Minnesota in 1787 through the Northwest Ordinance. The original goal was to create a government form that allowed our state better government and management. Today, while townships have evolved and adapted, they still stay true to the original goal of providing better services through local government. The March annual meeting provides residents the unique opportunity to define what services they want and how much tax to levy for these services.

I think the youth in my township could benefit more if a township representative came into our school and talked about our townships. They could tell us more about how the township runs and what they do for the residents in the area. I will be presenting information to my 4-H club and my senior political systems class on being a student election judge in my township.

When townships involve everyone in the community, we can work together. I am proud to be part of my community and to be active and involved. We all play a part in making our neighborhood, community and township a good place to live.