

If I Was Mayor

By Megan Rim

Our world has problems. We can't ignore them. We have trepidation of how much work and how many sacrifices we can allow. We fear the unknown, and are unsure if our solutions will be a success. Individuals become scared of proposing ideas, sacrificing their pride. But solutions, ideas, and thoughts do not need to completely solve a problem. Solving problems takes time, steps, and a start. If we are too frightened to try, too afraid to propose or even to begin, then the problem will aggravate.

I have ideas and solutions to propose. I thought about what I would do if I had the power and responsibility of Lake Oswego, if I was mayor. If I was mayor, I would propose solutions that could be improved and ameliorated to be made better and listen to others who have ideas. I would work to try to get the problems in Lake Oswego solved, one step at a time, one solution at a time, and work to bring our community together. Everyone could play their part, solving them together, and benefiting as one. Foremost, one of those ideas would be a volunteering opportunity.

When observing our community, I would like to believe that the citizens of Lake Oswego have a strong and favorable relationship with each other. However, when observed more closely, there is one weakness that sticks out like a sore thumb. It is the difference between senior citizens and teenagers, Gen-X versus baby boomers.

Technology has advanced more than ever. People like me, Gen-Z, or even millennials are able to keep up. However, for the older generations, it is much harder. They never grew up with technology like everyone else who only knew the wonders of having advanced technology becoming crazier every year. It is a large communal gap that shows more obviously for seniors when there are minor technology glitches or a need to set up new applications or changes due to updates.

I believe that the gap can be bridged by the younger generation, creating a bond, while helping the younger generation as well. Numerous high schools have a required number of volunteer hours students must fulfill. I believe that if we give high schoolers volunteering opportunities to visit senior centers and retirement areas, or start a call center to help seniors work through glitches/updates, it will enable the community to work together to bridge a gap and help high schoolers find connection in our community that might not otherwise exist. It would be a way for them to communicate, and get to know other people who are different ages, showing the differences and similarities between the two. It may take time, and it may take time to build a robust

program, but we can help the community one step at a time, one challenge at a time.

Furthermore, I have a second idea. This idea isn't so much for the safety of the community, but for the safety of the public. In every single area in the world with cars, there is bound to be car crashes. It may be due to natural disasters, drunk drivers, or any other possibility of casualties. However, it could be just because they stopped too late, or didn't realize that someone was crossing at that time. Especially in areas where there may be many pedestrians.

I once read an article in elementary school about a certain area at a school which was famous for casualties involving cars and pedestrians. When a single student realized the problem, she thought that one of the reasons why the area was so dangerous was because the crosswalk wasn't painted on the ground so that it was visible to the drivers. She then came up with the idea of a 3-d crosswalk, so that drivers would see it and be more aware. It wasn't an actual 3-d crosswalk, as that would cost more money than the budget could handle, but with just a little bit more paint, an illusion was made. Consequently, from a certain angle that drivers would see, it looked as if the crosswalk had appeared out of the ground, and they would hit it if they didn't stop in time. Of course, once they stopped, they would realize that the crosswalk wasn't 3-d. While they got used to seeing it, they also would have developed a habit of stopping fully before a crosswalk, greatly lowering the percentage of casualties with pedestrians and cars elsewhere.

If we added 3-d crosswalks where there are most pedestrian car crashes, we could try and use it as a test run. Not using many resources, just a bit more paint. If it was successful and lowered or diminished the number of crashes, then we could continue to paint 3-d crosswalks in more and more areas, beginning to build safer areas for pedestrians, students who walk home from school, and people who just generally like to walk or run outside. Everything takes baby steps, but small steps can lead to solving big problems.

So, if I was mayor, I wouldn't only propose ideas, but try to act on them, and listen to others to build a stronger bond with our community, and make the area safer. I would help everyone who wants to take part learn that they can. Everyone who sees the problems and wants to help, but doesn't know how. Leading them and our community in the right direction, and solving problems, one step at a time, one problem at a time, together to a better future.