

» Spotlight »

BY JOEL FISHER

AN old adage has it that in the Spring a young man's fancy turns to thoughts of love. With the lack of snow, warm breezes, and budding trees this writer's fancy turns to thoughts of a model, clean, desirable place to live — namely, here. Perhaps it is too much to reason that Robbins could become a picture book village over-night, but with a little constructive planning and civic interest the could change quickly.

As an example of what civic minded citizens can do is best shown by the progress made in the new sub-division of Hometown, lying just west and north of Robbins. This suburban development grew from a prairie four years ago to a town of over 6,000. While it is not the intention of this column to mislead you on the facts and try to compare the Village with a fully developed, improved community for Whites, I do propose to show how people working together, can accomplish almost any desirable aim. Hometown has a modern police force of 54 volunteer members; headed by a single salaried chief. The force is equipped with one police car with a two-way radio. This was a contribution of the people. Their new police station, lacking a jail, was also given by the public. Each member of the force, ranging from professional man to common laborer, has been thoroughly trained by Chicago and Cook County Police. Along with the average home owner, they are working together to see that law and order are maintained; and they have gained the respect of most outsiders. In contrast, Robbins police are poorly trained, lack worth-while equipment, and seem to work in confusion, at times. They are not supported by the people as a whole, and the funds for rectifying the situation are just not forthcoming. With more careful planning and active interest on the part of the citizens, we too, could have a modern police force.

This particular comparison of our police with those of Hometown's is not the only facet in a series of comparisons that could be made with communities even smaller than Robbins. The Village of Alsip, just north of Robbins, on the other side of the canal, is a closely knit group of home owners who are interested in the many issues that they must face personally. Last week a homeowner's association of Alsip filed suit

against the City of Chicago to restrain the city and Cook County from polluting the Calumet Canal and the Des Plaines River. The people claimed that raw sewerage is being emptied into these outlets and as a result are polluting the wells in Alsip. They further asked the Sanitary District to run tests to determine the degree of pollution. Although they were rebuffed in this particular case and told to ask Worth Township to present their case, the effort on their parts as interested citizens could serve as an example to the Village of Robbins. Right now, we are in the midst of a quarrel over sewers and water in the Village. The oneness of the officials can even be discounted as the majority of the Trustees seem to say, "Let George do it."

The last comparison that I shall make at this time is one that is perhaps most needed in the Village of Robbins. It is calling for the officials and the citizens to prove that they are interested in the welfare of the Youth of this village. Last year the people of Oak Lawn, realizing that their children should have adequate and supervised recreational facilities, set out to get the Town of Oak Lawn to build a club house for the youth. When they were told that the funds just didn't exist and the people could not stand another tax raise, they began to get public subscriptions and contributions for the building. Soon the "kitty" swelled to over \$20,000.00. The craftsmen and builders contributed their professional know-how and the average man in the street did the actual labor. At the end of the year, they had erected a

\$36,000.00 building and field house for their children. Could it happen in Robbins? Surely, it could if the people wanted it. We just don't have enough active, well planning, willing workers and parents in Robbins.

SPOTLIGHT does not mean to condemn all the parents and those interested in helping the youth of this community get a good start, and I would like to bouquets to Mrs. Ernestine Williams for her efforts to help the boys and girls themselves. She is working on a plan which will help the children to earn money for themselves and help keep them actively employed after school hours. At this particular time we do not have all the facts, but Spotlight passes this tip along to any boy or girl between the ages of 12 through high school age to see Mrs. Williams as soon as possible to get started to earn money for yourself. Her address is 3726 W. 141st street, Robbins. Don't put off until it is too late. Plan to see Mrs. Williams right away.

Remember that Spotlight will help any worthwhile organization or group try to work out plans for helping the youth of this community. We need a forum of all active groups because we are all working for the same thing. By pooling our resources we can be more effective. Don't forget to read Spotlight in the Eagle each week. That's all, see you next week. Drive carefully; the life you save might be mine.

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