

Received 6/30/11
12:25 p.m.
J.H.

After the last few months, I felt I should at least submit a letter of interest for the position of Mayor. I am a business owner in Red Lodge, my husband Les and I own the Napa Auto Parts store. Les was born and raised here in Red Lodge, I arrived about 28 years ago.

I came to Red Lodge as a 20 something, I came for the night life, I was young and wanted to have a good time. I managed one of the group homes in town when I first moved here. I remember at one point meeting with my boss and telling him I didn't have my own life in order how was I supposed to take care of 8 others people's lives plus manage the staff. I learned a lot those years at the group home, forgiveness, determination, but mostly that most people have good intentions, we just make mistakes, sometimes those mistakes are minor and sometimes they have severe consequences, but if a person is honest and has good intentions people will understand.

Les and I started a family and got married. I continued my work with the disabled in Red Lodge for a few more years and then decided to stay home with my kids before they went off to school. I considered myself lucky~ my husband worked 12-15 hour days, which allowed me to be home with them for a few years before they went off to school. Owning a business in Red Lodge is hard~ there were times when we didn't get to take a paycheck, there were bills to pay and those came first. The years we struggled helped us, we lived without the luxuries, we loved living here and we didn't want to raise our children any other place.

Our children graduated from Red Lodge schools with a great education and I couldn't be prouder of each of them. They are my greatest accomplishment. When they started in school, I helped start a local Parent/Teacher Organization. I was active with the schools, the school board and had many "meetings" with the administration, to voice my opinion and offer my help to make the schools better for all of its students. I continue to have a relationship with those that I disagreed with over the years because sometimes in life things don't always go as you think they should, but I am a reasonable person and can listen to others ideas and learn from them.

Over the past few years I have watched as the publicity coming out of City Hall has been nothing but negative, there were fights with the state, over the sidewalks and new roads, fights with the county, a police force that wanted the town to know that they were watching and expecting the worst at any moment. This was not the Red Lodge I had grown to love~ I think we are better than that. I am not naive~ I know that we have our share of issues but I also believe that agencies working together will serve this community better for all of us.

I think it is important as an administration to realize that most of the people living full time in Red Lodge are here trying to make a living and make ends meet. It is important to educate the "newcomers", that we need a diverse community. The young people keep this town alive, they serve our food, wash our dishes, and take care of our elderly and disabled. They support the businesses in town. The elderly worked hard their whole lives to survive in this town. They live off very little resources and every tax/service increase makes a huge difference to them. We are not a rich town, we are a hardworking, wonderful tourist town with a ski area. We should be welcoming to all people, but not forget those that have worked hard to continue to live here. It is important to bring people from all walks of life to the table.

Thanks for your consideration, I hope that as we go forward we can learn from each other and listen to each other~

Sincerely~



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