

Isn't it great to wake up here in Warren County?

Well as wonderful as it is, I'll bet each one of us has something we'd like improved...driving down Front Street you wonder why the town doesn't resurface the streets. Or when those summer storms roll in and your lights start flickering, you wish our utilities in Norlina or Warrenton were underground. Or maybe you'd like an in-town park where we could go for picnics or cookouts. Fixing these things simply comes down to available money.

As Susan Harris of Quilt Lizzy mentioned two weeks ago in her talk at the Small Business Summit, if we're waiting for the BIG event, the BIG money, the BIG whatever to solve all our problems, we're going to be disappointed. It's going to take lots of little efforts to grow the money available so our County and Town officials can check some of these things off their "To-Do" lists.

I got an idea for the start of a solution after I attended our Family Reunion in South Carolina this year. In the 70's, we used to have more than 175 people attend. This September--45 people. As we talked about dwindling attendance it seemed impossible to get 100 more people to come back and rebuild the reunion. Then a cousin suggested we just eat the elephant one bite a time...by each of us committing to bring just 1 more person next year. Simple, right? My wife couldn't attend this year, so next September when she comes, I'll have fulfilled my commitment. If just half the people do that, then we're up to 67 people...and in 2017 with just bringing one more person, we'll hit 100! So let's take that approach here in Warren County...

With the sales tax, we keep 2% of money we spend right here. Let's say that just one quarter of the 16,000 adults in Warren County spend only \$25 a week locally that you weren't spending here before...in the course of a year that means \$96,000 more for things that we need. I know we couldn't put utilities underground for that, but I'll bet we could repave at least a few streets with that money or start on a small park in Norlina.

So, if I could ask you a small favor...in November, before you head for Lowe's, why not stop by Warrenton Supply or Lee Roy West's first? You might just find what you need and save a trip. When you go out for dinner, instead of heading for South Hill or Henderson why not take the family to Robinson Ferry or The Whistlestop or FoodWorks? Just a dinner for two or a few items from our discount stores instead of WalMart can add up to that \$25 in no time.

And there's an even better bonus. When you spend in Warren County, you can ensure that we'll continue to have hardware stores, tire stores, discount stores, restaurants and all of the other outstanding local businesses here when you need them.

So, while this idea might just create a little nibble on the toe of our elephant, with time we will make progress and make our outstanding home even better.

I'm always available at 252-257-2657 or via email at info@warren-chamber.org. I'm looking forward to talking with you!

---Craig Hahn