September Mayor Message

Service Starts Next Door

Throughout this year, I have used my Mayor's Messages to highlight the many ways Citrus Heights serves. This month, as we approach National Good Neighbor Day on September 28, I want to bring that spirit of service even closer to home.

Being a good neighbor often begins with something simple: learning someone's name, stopping to talk or noticing when a little help may be needed. These everyday connections are especially meaningful for older residents who live alone, have limited transportation or may not see friends and family as often as they once did.

Citrus Heights is fortunate to have many active seniors who volunteer, support local organizations and share their experience with younger generations. They contribute immeasurably to the character of our community. At the same time, some of our senior neighbors could benefit from a helping hand or a little more connection.

National Good Neighbor Day was established in 1978 to encourage people to build stronger relationships with those who live around them. Today, communities across the country extend that spirit through Good Neighbor Week, observed September 28 through October 4. It offers a timely reminder that a connected community is built one relationship at a time.

Supporting a senior neighbor does not have to require a major commitment. You might:

- Bring in a garbage cart or package
- Offer a ride to an appointment or the grocery store
- Help with a small household or yard task
- Share information about a community event or local resource
- Invite them for coffee or a walk
- Exchange phone numbers so they know whom to call if they need help
- Simply stop by, say hello and spend a few minutes visiting

These gestures may seem small, but their impact can be significant. A quick conversation can ease isolation. An occasional errand can help someone remain independent. Exchanging contact information can provide reassurance during extreme weather, a power outage or another unexpected situation.

Citrus Heights also offers places for older adults to stay active and connected. The Citrus Heights Senior Center provides a welcoming space for social gatherings, while Sunrise Recreation and Park District offers activities and resources for older adults. Residents interested in serving more formally can also explore volunteer opportunities with the City and local community organizations.

Good neighbors do more than help one another. They create a sense of belonging and help make neighborhoods safer and more resilient. They also build connections across generations. Younger residents can offer time and energy, while older neighbors share history, perspective and skills developed over a lifetime. Everyone has something to contribute.

During Good Neighbor Week, I encourage you to reach out to a senior who lives nearby. Ask how they are doing, offer a hand or make time for a visit. Better yet, let that first conversation become a lasting connection.

Service does not always begin with a formal program or organized event. Sometimes, it begins by walking next door.

In Community,

MariJane Lopez-Taff

Mayor