



“It Just Makes Sense”

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”Christmas Gift to Iowa!”

The spiritual basis for Christmas tends to take a back seat to the commercial gauntlet that is in front of us each year. We become a nation where “presents” become the measurement of our Christmas experience. If you were searching for a positive aspect to this trend it may be the inherent sense of “giving” with the idea that it is “better to give than to receive”.

As we go into this Christmas - take a moment to see what present we can “give” to our State. Yes – let’s put Iowa on our Christmas shopping list! The State has been pretty good to us in terms of providing a high quality of life – maybe we owe it something.

The gift that I would like to suggest is a change in any behavior by yourself and those around you that may tend to degrade or negatively impact the quality of our State. Specifically let’s build on the idea on increasing pride and respect for a State that has generally provided us with a “good life”. Enhance the beauty of your home, neighborhood and community. Take the time to:

- Improve an area that is in disrepair.
- Remove a public nuisance.
- Paint a building.
- Help a neighbor improve their property.
- Mow an area filled with weeds.
- Sponsor a clean-up event.
- Plant a tree, prairie or flowers.
- Work with government officials to improve ordinances and policies that will enhance the quality of life in your community.
- Repair a fence or building.
- Develop a recycling philosophy in your community.
- Replace a broken window.

- Make sure that your school has a litter free school campus.
- Encourage all community events / parades to be litter free.
- See that all school athletic events are litter free.

This present to Iowa can result in a 2007 that means:

- Increased pride and respect for our home, neighborhood and community.
- Reduced levels of littering and a cleaner State.
- Communities that have become increasingly clean and attractive.
- Increased economic activity in those communities.
- Litter Free Schools throughout Iowa.
- Reduced incidences of illegal dumping.
- A commitment by Iowan's to improve and enhance the natural and cultural beauty of our State.
- An enforcement philosophy that focuses on the "small" laws thereby decreasing major crime.

This gift can not only fit under the tree – it can be the tree itself or any act of improving the image and beauty of Iowa – what a great present. Let the true spirit of the season guide us in making the gift of a more beautiful Iowa.

Happy Holidays!

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See you in the next column.

Helping to Keep Iowa Beautiful