

Olivia French
Grade Three, First Place and Grand Prize Winner
Susan Rainaldi, Teacher

Living in a community you like and doing whatever you're good at doing for the town is the right mix to make a great neighborhood. You need to be a good person in your community because communities are strong when you help others. By being a good community member yourself, you can teach other neighbors to be good members, too. It's really smart to make sure the children know how they can be helpful, too.

First, you need to know the history of where you live. You need to know its beginnings before you can be a part of its "now". Seeing yourself as a part of a whole is important, too. Good things like events for families, town safety, keeping nature healthy, and planning what comes next don't just happen. It takes many people working on a job they know is important to make the whole town work well for the year. Seeing what happens at the municipal building is a good way to learn how to get started seeing what you can do to help.

A big part of community building is having kids growing up knowing they can be a helper at any age. If high school kids still want to be a part of town things, then something went right. I know I can volunteer at the school because I've done it before and I want to keep helping. I also know kids can work with the Fire, Police, and Rescue Squads; 4H and Scouts and memorial clubs also help families who need help with food, clothing, and home needs. The best way to learn about these chances to help is by talking about it, so being friendly and having fun, simple times at your neighbor's BBQ is important, too.

It's great where we live because it's pretty here, but it's the people who want to do things to make us safe, healthy, smart, and ready for what's next that make this community work. Thank you, Rural Awareness, for this essay project and for visiting our school each year.