SMM17\_VITA\_WM50

What do you like about Meadville?

I like the small town atmosphere and I enjoy some of the things you can do around here for entertainment?

(with humor) Such as?

Well, you have a community theater and you have Allegheny College nearby that brings in entertainment. If you have a car, you can go on one tank of gas and it'll get you a lot of places and you can always go to Erie.

So what about the feeling of the smalltown makes it feel comfortable here?

I'm an advocate of the Market House, I'm down there every day, sometimes more. I go up to the Gardner theater sometimes and enjoy the music and I like the atmosphere inside there and how it feels and all.

So in how thinking about why you feel connected to this community are there other examples?

Yes, I was born here and I raised my family here, I own a house here and my children are still in town so that's kind of a magnetism there - I guess we're truthfully trying to get out, but we haven't made it yet (laughing).

So what are the things that we could bring to Meadville that would make you not want to get out.

I guess it's pretty much attitude, if you look around everyone's pretty much like doom and gloom there's no work here, you can't go out at night, and people are starting to feel like its kind of a war-zone on some of the streets now, I mean really - I mean - you're not affiliated with the newspaper are you?

No (laughing) not at all.

Its just like Trump says, we're playing up too much negative news - too much negative news in this town - we need to you, you know, give some credit where credit is due - it may not be a top story but you know, if somebody's doing some good for the community, say for example somebody like you - you ought to be on the front page, as far as I'm concerned.

So, celebrating what we have

well maybe,

Or at least acknowledging it

Not that we should throw a party, but celebrating good stuff in other ways.

Right,

I believe that a lot of churches in this area are losing populace, and churches are combining as that happens - and maybe people are double doing, like preaching at this church and then going over there to preach at that church because they can't each afford their own - I'm not pushing religion, I'm just saying that it is a lot of basis for a lot of community activities.

So what are some of the things that your children experienced growing up here that maybe we have lost and should try to reclaim?

Well, my children have actually brought some things to light that they experienced, that I never had to put up with. I was sitting here looking from my spot across at the top of the steps (at LTI), and that was my spot when I went to school, that used to be a school. I asked my sons where would their spots be and they had a different school completely up there. What would I think we need? Maybe to keep the children active - I can show you places in this town where there are feral children up the street and there is nothing else for them to do - they're just waiting for trouble.

Hmmm, who else can I bash...

My last question is : if you had the city's budget and could decide the city's top priority..

Well who would want it that city is out of money, but they have made some bad moves as far that goes, that's my personal opinion. We decided to take out the stop lights eleven years ago because they used too much electricity - we just took them out. We have chaos here, so they decided to put stop signs in where they took out some lights - the study to figure out the best way was $52000 - you tell me you can't buy electricity for a long time for $52,000? Put in some LED lights, and you got it - I'm just saying.

Oh, if I had and unlimited budget and I could improve things - I would focus on our main drag and the places that could be of interest to tourists. When you drive off the interstate and you come up through town, its depressing I tell you.

And you know what we need in this town? A broom! We need a broom - I'm not kidding, the old shop owners used to get out every morning and sweep up in front of their shops - there's only one guy in Meadville now that does it and that's the animal refuge guy over on Park - that's the only guy that gets out there and does it - we need more people like that!

Thank you very much for your time.