

Carrollton teens get a taste of local government

Nick Marsh, Carrollton's city attorney, is a great example of what can happen when a young person is given a true voice in community issues. When Marsh was a teenager, he served on the Carrollton's City Council as one of its teen council members. He went on to college and law school, and ultimately landed back in his hometown to practice law. Now, he's the city attorney, helping to create the kind of place he's proud to call home. For Marsh, this full-circle trip back into city government was sparked by the high school experience as a student city council member.

Founded in 1978 by then-Mayor **Charlie Webster**, Carrollton's teen council member program has benefited the city and the students who participate. The program started with one teen member but added another student member during the administration of immediate past mayor **Ann Deatherage**. The students say they appreciate the "safety in numbers."

Jessica Glauber and **Nick Larimore**, both high school seniors in Carrollton and already accepted into the University of Kentucky, served on the council from December 2005 to December 2006. They said the program went above and beyond their expectations. They appreciated being able to bring a different perspective to the council meetings and said the experience looked great on college applications.

These students also participate in student government, athletics and community-sponsored activities, including volunteering.

Glauber made an effort during her term to have the Community Advisory Panel sponsor two \$2,500 scholarships. The Community Advisory Panel communicates information between the industries in Carrollton and the public. The panel, like the city council, allows two students to participate as members for one year.

Larimore and Glauber agreed their favorite aspect of their term was the public policy process. The city's alcohol policy was under review and the students were able to see the entire process. "It was a great experience to learn everything involved with changing a public policy," Glauber said.

Current Mayor **Dwight Loudon** was a council member for 15 years before being elected mayor. Loudon has always supported the program.



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The teen council members have specific responsibilities while involved in the program. During council meetings, they sit at the table and are encouraged to participate in discussions. They are expected to attend at least two meetings a month and give reports to Carroll County High School.

The student council members are not allowed to vote during the meetings or make proposals, but they are encouraged to give their opinions. "The topic at one meeting was the city receiving a sidewalk grant. The council members were trying to decide what to do with an alleyway in town. We were able to give our opinions based on what other students would think, and the council took it into consideration. It was a great experience to have our voice heard at the council meeting," Larimore said.

"Being a teen council member was a great experience," said Marsh, the city attorney. "I would recommend it to any council or city government that is considering it. It is a cost-effective program because there is little to no cost, but more importantly, it is very educational for the students who participate."

During the year Larimore was a teen council member, Deatherage and Loudon were council members.

"Our new teen council members, **Brady Bickers** and **Haley Franklin**, have been serving since January. Both seem

Carrollton at a Glance

Mayor: Dwight Louden

Population: 3,846

Location: Carrollton is nestled in the northern region of Kentucky, midway between Louisville and Cincinnati. Carrollton is situated at the confluence of the Kentucky and Ohio Rivers.

History: Carrollton, the county seat of Carroll County, was first known as Port William. The name was changed to Carrollton in 1838 when Gallatin County and Port William were divided. Carrollton is named for the last surviving signer of the Declaration of Independence, Charles Carroll of Carrollton, Md.

James Harrod was part of a group that camped in the area in 1774 before settling Harrodsburg. In 1794, Benjamin Craig Sr. and James Hawkins purchased the land now known as Carrollton, from the William Peachy land grant. This area was named Port William.

In the early days of Carrollton, then Port William, the area was well-known for its public markets and community fish traps at the mouth of the Kentucky River. A wharf, boatyard and heavy river traffic were also common.

Special Events and Attractions:

Almost every weekend throughout the

year General Butler State Resort Park offers family-friendly activities such as dinner theater, camping, heritage festivals, and concerts with music from Bluegrass to Celtic. The park is named for one of Kentucky's most influential military families and hosts 1 million visitors a year. Points Park, where the Kentucky and Ohio rivers meet, is another Carrollton site to visit.

Kentucky Veterans Memorial was designed by John Geisler of Carroll County and Jim Sutherland from Trimble County.

The Butler-Tipton House (1859) was home to members of Gen. William O.

Butler's family and the 1790-built Masterson House is believed to be the oldest two-story, solid-masonry home on the Ohio River between Pennsylvania and Illinois.

Glauber's Shoe Store, one of the oldest family-owned shoe stores in the

United States, has operated in the same location near the river since 1873.

Natives of Carrollton: Col. Percival Butler was appointed Kentucky's first adjutant general during the first term of Gov. Isaac Shelby. Butler served

with George Washington at Valley Forge and Lafayette at Yorktown. He settled in Jessamine County before moving to Carrollton. After his military service he was elected clerk of Carroll County.

Gen. William O. Butler was born in Kentucky in 1791, fought in the War of 1812 and was a member of Gen. Andrew Jackson's staff from 1816-1817. He is also

known for his heroic efforts in the Mexican War. Butler was defeated in the governor's race of 1844.

For more information on Carrollton, visit these Web sites:

www.carrolltonky.net

www.carrolltontourism.com

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like wonderful young people, and I am glad to have an opportunity to get to know each of them," said Louden.

Carrollton is not the only city with a program to involve students in local government. In Richmond, Mayor Connie Lawson started a program that allows Eastern Kentucky University students to be a part of Richmond's city government.

EKU students live in Richmond nine months out of the year if not all year while attending college there. Lawson feels that they should have a voice in the city because they are taxpayers. The students are appointed to committees in the city government that would most likely have the greatest impact on them while they live in the Richmond.

Cultivating leadership and citizen involvement is one of the 12 Principles of the NewCities Institute. Programs involving students in local government are a great way to encourage involvement in the local community, connecting people to their place. Such programs can help students become leaders in their community and understand the importance of local government.

—NEWCITIES INSTITUTE STAFF

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