

# Lodge: Can't recall saying 'no' to service

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Nancy said serving as a city councilor has brought her joy.

"Being on the city council makes me feel good, that I'm needed to help the community members on whatever project comes up," she said. "I'm hoping I can help represent the people on an intellectual level."

"Nancy has a wonderful sense of humor," McArdle said. "She's always focused on what's best for the community. She always looks at all sides and makes decisions about what's best for everyone, and she does it with a smile and grace."

Nancy isn't only known for her service on city council. In fact, many know of her through Friends of the Independence Public Library, an organization she has been involved with for years.

Betty Plude first met Nancy through the Friends group.

"She's amazing," Plude said. "I love to go anywhere with her. She's one of my best friends, but why I want to be with her is she has a laugh that makes you laugh. She has the best laugh."

Nancy was integral to building the new Independ-

ence library. Being on the city council and a member of the Friends group, she learned what an important role the library plays in the community.

"That was a real eye-opener for me," she said. "It really is an important institution."

Nancy credits the work of Robin Puccetti, the library director, for getting her so involved, but Morton will attest to the fact that Nancy is an enabler when it comes to volunteering.

"She's very good at suggesting to people that they need to be involved in something, and that the level of involvement would not be expected at a greater level than she, herself, would give," Morton said. "Nancy is an absolute, unqualified doer."

In fact, Morton and Nancy sort of egg each other on when it comes to service. Nancy started volunteering at the Monmouth-Independence Chamber of Commerce while Morton was the chamber director.

"She is a motivator of change," Morton said. "When it was time to take the wreaths down and put the banners up, Nancy would make the announce-



COMMUNITY CHAMPIONS

ment: Who would like to do this with me? So she would take part of it; and someone else would take part of it."

She has served on the board of directors for the Independence Downtown Association, helped with the Hops & Heritage Festival, taken tickets at the River's Edge Summer Series.

She has organized and lead the annual Parade of Lights committee.

She puts together the annual Walk of Hearts in downtown Independence each February.

On top of her community volunteerism, she reads to kindergarteners each week through the SMART program.

"They're wonderful," Nancy said about the children. "I just adore them, and it's so much fun to read to them. There's no pressure. We're not there to teach



EMILY MENTZER/Itemizer-Observer file

**Nancy Lodge gets a lesson on planting fruit trees in small spaces at the Mt. Fir Park's Master Gardener's Inspiration Garden.**

them to read. We're there to let them enjoy the experience of reading however they want."

Nancy is a flutist, and has a passion for music and the arts. It's no surprise, then, that she finds herself working on the boards of the Ash Creek Arts Center and the

Smith Fine Arts program.

"I'm a real fan of the arts," she said. "And I'm a musician myself, so I really see the value of teaching the arts and the discipline involved in it, and the creativity. There's so many elements that make a good citizen."

Above all, it's the feeling

she gets that keeps Nancy saying yes — she can't recall a time when she said no.

"I think it just makes me feel good to work with the people in our community, and helping them out and having fun," Nancy said. "Having fun is really what it's all about."

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