

Did you know that over the past few years, a growing number of Americans have been moving back to the small towns and rural communities they were once encourage to leave? According to Grace Olmstead, who wrote an essay printed in the Wall Street Journal, this movement has even increased during the Covid-19 pandemic. She also reported that many people have moved home to help out with family businesses, support aging loved ones or just to enjoy small town life.

As I read this article, I could not help but think of the many young people who have moved back to Sabetha in the years since I moved here in 1977. Today, there are local medical professionals, accountants, salesmen, teachers and business professionals working and living in the Sabetha area who have “come home.” And what’s more there are many of those who are now taking active roles as board members, coaches and volunteers.

Returning home after college or trade school is not usually on the top of the to-do list of recent high school graduates, however many who have done so find the decision to be one they are glad they made. Moving back to a small town after becoming accustomed the amenities of city life, such as an abundance of restaurants and more cultural events to attend, can be difficult at first, but for many, the advantages of small town life seem to outweigh the advantages of city life.

Returning home is good for the returners as philosopher Simone Weil wrote, “To be rooted is perhaps the most important and least recognized need of the human soul.” She adds that “we grow roots, through real, active and natural participation in the life of a community.”

Olmstead concluded her essay by looking back on the year, 2020 and how the hardships of it have changed her. She says she is reminded how “much I miss being close to family and how much I want to invest in the land and the community that raised me.”

GSCF works to raise up the community of Sabetha in many ways. Our goal is to uphold organizations that exist to help others and as we do this, connections are made between those who are making the efforts to help and those who have the resources to help. Every one of us falls into one of those categories, so the question we have to ask is how are we doing? This question is for each person to answer personally and if needed privately. But the needs are there whatever your answer is. To serve or to help others serve in this small rural town that we love and call home, is a privilege with lasting positive consequences.