

What Makes Up A Community?

Have you ever taken a step back and thought about what makes the community you live in so wonderful? Why is your community so much better than another? Shops? Housing? Neighbors? Access to businesses? What about the people who live in it?

Have you thought about the people who make up the community? Have you thought about that Little League coach who volunteers their time and helps your child get better playing ball? Or that PTO Mom that volunteers her time to help the school raise much needed money for different events at the school? Or the parent that will drive your kids to/from an event because you're not able to? What about the person who "pays it forward" and pays for your Starbucks coffee in the drive through line? How many times have you "bought" something from a child who was selling cookies, wrapping paper or pizzas just because you wanted to help them out? Those are all some things that make a community as great as it is.

What about a small business in your community that does that as well? **Pioneer Travel** is very involved in the community and giving back as well. Behind the scenes, we are very involved in non-profit organizations like the Ronald McDonald House of Eastern Wisconsin, Special Olympics, Firefighters 4 Charity, Eternal Wish, BROADS for a Cause, as well as donating prizes for silent auctions at local events. We believe in being able to give back to the community and volunteer our time to make these organizations that much better.

With the Ronald McDonald House, Pioneer Travel donates Christmas presents every Christmas to help the families who are not able to spend their Christmas at home with friends and loved ones. Having to stay at the Ronald McDonald House is stressful enough for families, because it usually means that someone in the family has a medical condition that requires spending a longer period of time in the hospital, and the family needs to stay nearby. Knowing that the family will have some presents for their children to open on Christmas morning, is very special to us to know that we are a part of making that happen.

Pioneer Travel also collects soda/pop tabs for the Ronald McDonald House, and participate every year in their "Tab Toss" in May. This allows the Ronald McDonald House to sell the aluminum from the pop tabs and use the money to help support the House and the families that need their assistance. During this time, Pioneer Travel also will donate a collection of unused hotel toiletry items that our clients will collect that go unused, so the families will have some supplies to use while they are staying there as well. It's the little things that you miss day to day when you're away from home. If you are interested in collecting toiletry items or pop tabs, we are more than happy to come pick up any of these items and donate to a worthy cause.

And of course, during February, Pioneer Travel will purchase cases of Girl Scout Cookies to donate as well. This not only helps out a local Girl Scout Troop, but also gives the families at the Ronald McDonald House something to enjoy and put a smile on their face, even if it's for a little while.

I am personally very involved in Special Olympics. I have been working with them for the past 10 years, and watching these athletes compete, really puts everything else in perspective. I will donate my time

to officiate Special Olympics basketball and softball, spending full days making sure they are able to enjoy themselves and compete. I will help officiate Regional as well as State tournaments for them in the Milwaukee area, Kenosha, as well as up in Oshkosh, WI.

No matter how tired I am, how bad of a week I have had, I spend some time around these amazing athletes, and everything is re-set back into perspective. These incredible athletes love to compete, but they are more worried about “high-fiving” or cheering for their opponents as much as they are for their own team. It is truly a fantastic organization and this past summer proud to assist 75 athletes, coaches and parents to go to Seattle for the USA Games for Special Olympics. I donated my time and expertise to make sure they were taken care of and helped get their flights, hotels and transportation to send them off to Seattle, as well as a parade of the athletes at the Capitol in Madison.

When you think about “Make-A-Wish”, what do you think about? You think about kids that have terminal illnesses that want a “wish” granted to them before they pass. The “Eternal Wish” is the same idea, except for adults who have a terminal illness. What happens to those kids when they get older? Do they lose their “wish”? Eternal Wish makes sure they try to fulfill as many “wishes” as they can for adults, and Pioneer Travel has been able to assist in helping a few of these wishes come true. From a wish for a woman who had never left Wisconsin in 50+ years, go to Disney World and see Mickey, to a gentleman who wanted to see the Dallas Cowboys play in person, and with the assistance of Pioneer Travel and Carnival Cruise Lines, were able to get him up into a suite for part of the game in Dallas, to assisting in granting a wish of a young couple to go to Hawaii. Pioneer Travel donates their time and waives their fees to make these wishes come true.

Firefighters 4 Charity is an organization that raises money throughout the year to help burn victims go to burn camp and to have a “normal” life. They typically do a bowling event every March, as well as a golf outing in September to help raise money for their cause. The organization has been active for the past 8 years, and already has raised over \$100,000 in donations to assist burn families and other organizations in the area.

BROADS for a Cause is a newer organization that will do a “Casino Night” every year, with the proceeds being donated to a local charity. This past February, they did a “Casino Night” to benefit Special Olympics, and after everything was said and done, they raised just under \$40,000 to donate to the organization.

Between all of these organizations, Pioneer Travel is very involved in helping them be successful, and truly giving back to the community. That is what small businesses can do. When you book online through a travel website, where does the money go? Does it trickle back down to your community? Do they care about someone who needs a little assistance in your area? When you use Pioneer Travel for your travel plans, you can be rest assured, not only do you get professional assistance with your travel plans, but some of that money will be donated back into the community and given back to those that truly need it.

Pioneer Travel has been in business for the past 7 years, and even though we are a small local business, we have donated over \$20,000 in donations, volunteering and free services. Isn't that a company that you would want in your community?

When you're planning on traveling, please think of Pioneer Travel, and help us give back to the community.

*-please feel free to contact us for information on any of these fantastic organizations we are involved with.