

Welcome to Aught Nine! This is the beginning and despite what the cable news anchors shout repeatedly, it is a new year and there are good things in the future. Part of locating them is our responsibility. Defining "good" is an important segment of that job.

"Good" means that something in us feels better because another thing happened. Like when we take our four year old to a first soccer practice and watch a shy child enter into a group, kick a ball toward a goal and see the sunrise smile on a small face as others cheer. That is really "Good".

"Good" means helping to support an organization that keeps children and teens healthy and active throughout the year. It means volunteering to administer, referee, coach and organize. Seeing fit kids engaged in something they really enjoy is certainly "good".

"Good" also means seeing things work out fairly. Soccer joins the ranks of sanctioned sports. The soccer complex stops being used as a puck between the developer and the city council so the soccer folks can finally get fundraising under way. Rapid City begins to see that offering a higher quality of lifestyle is actually a sound financial investment.

"Good" means all soccer organizations find ways to provide opportunities for all kids to enjoy the game. It means actively seeking financial support for the scholarship funds and helping kids get what they need.

"Good" means that families spend more time on walks, hikes, and library visits than video games, shopping sprees, and boys' nights out. If the downturn in the economy results in the upturn in stronger families and healthier Americans, we'll have an incredible recovery.

"Good" means we all contribute ideas and innovations to save energy, support new resources, and plan for a more sustainable community.

There will be some times when the search for "good" becomes more of a challenge but if we all commit to finding whatever is good (big or small) in the months ahead, 2009 will be a very good year.