

Rachel Lewis  
2011- 4<sup>th</sup> of July Essay Contest

When you think about the small town of Gibbsboro, what comes to mind? Is it the Fourth of July Parade, the tree lighting ceremony, or the 8<sup>th</sup> grade graduation? Or is it something like the refurbished cricket field, Masso's, or Lucas Lake? All of these things and more are what make the town of Gibbsboro so unique. There have been discussions about consolidating Gibbsboro with one of the surrounding towns. Consolidating Gibbsboro with another town would take away from the little things that make Gibbsboro so unique and so special.

As we all know, Gibbsboro is a small town, but that's what makes it exceptional. As a result of having a small town, we have a small school. Despite its size, Gibbsboro School is a place where children make lasting bonds and friendships with friends and teachers. It's hard to do something like that in other schools with more kids. If Gibbsboro were to be consolidated with another town, that quality of Gibbsboro School would be taken away. Also, our school already does a great job of teaching kids and preparing them for their futures in high school and beyond. This year at Eastern High School three students from Gibbsboro were ranked in the top fifteen percent in their class. This goes to prove just how remarkable Gibbsboro School is and how much its students can and will accomplish despite the fact that it is miniscule.

Secondly, while consolidating Gibbsboro would include countywide police and fire protection services, the Gibbsboro police and fire department already do a fabulous job. For example, during Vacation Bible School at Gibbsboro United Methodist Church there is always a policeman there to help kids and their families cross the street. The policemen and firemen also actively participate in school functions such as Read Across

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America. The policemen and firemen here aren't just doing their jobs, they truly care about the people of Gibbsboro. We can recognize them on the job and they're friendly towards us.

Lastly, the people of Gibbsboro are all connected due to the fact that we live in a small town. Whether you're going for a walk around town or getting ice cream at Masso's you're bound to see someone you know. Because our town is so small we all know each other and we are all friendly with each other. If you go to any other town not everyone knows each other and some people may not even know where things are around town. That's not the case here in Gibbsboro and that is something we can take pride in. This characteristic of Gibbsboro is one that is comforting because you know there are always people watching out for you that care about you. This very important feature of Gibbsboro is one we developed without being consolidated with another nearby town.

In conclusion, Gibbsboro should remain unchanging when it comes to consolidating with one of the surrounding towns. Gibbsboro is perfect the way it is. We have a school system that provides long lasting relationships and an exceptional education, policemen and firemen that have true concern for our safety, and us, and a tight-knit community that loves and cares for one another much like a family does. Our small town has already accomplished so much and because we are all so close to one another, we will continue to achieve many great things together. As Henry Ford once said, "Coming together is a beginning. Keeping together is progress. Working together is success."