Mayor Max of Idyllwild Unifies Citizens and Lifts Spirits

In the small town of Idyllwild in Southern California, one golden retriever named Max has proven to be extraordinarily talented in the art of bringing people together. It is a well-known fact that dogs are man’s best friend. In the small town of Idyllwild, Southern California, one particularly special golden retriever has taken this calling to the next level. Max, the golden retriever has served as mayor of the small town since 2013, according to the Mayor Max website.

It all started in 2012 when Animal Rescue Friends, a non-profit organization, designed an event with the intent to elect one of the small-town pets as mayor. Because the town is so small, animal ownership is high, and no human town members wanted to run for mayor, ARF decided to elect one of the pets. Voting was held online by a vote for $1. The fund raiser for ARF raised $31,000. Out of all the pets nominated, Max won two-thirds of the votes. When he passed away in 2013, his successor, Max II took his place and has served as mayor ever since. Service comes naturally for Mayor Max II, the now 8-year-old golden retriever, and he takes his position very seriously. Daily duties consist of campaigning along the
Max, the beloved mayor of Idyllwild, stated on his website, “I want to know what is needed... from each person.” He also leaves flyers around town and promotes the non-profit organization that designed the election, ARF. On his website, Max also declared that he would make all candidates from the previous election “Deputy Mayors” with “equal status” as the official mayor. He also invited all Deputy Mayors to participate in the Fourth of July parade. Max’s website also has his Certificate of Appointment and a free printable Max the mayor themed calendar has calendars available on his website along with a job description and Certificate of Appointment. This lighthearted phenomenon has many positive outcomes in the mountain town of Idyllwild. In one public interview conducted on Feb. 4, 2020 by CBS Evening News had citizens from both sides of the isle praising Max’s effort to bring people together.

In the days of a divided America, ravaged by a pandemic, it’s important not to underestimate the value of sweet and simple things. This fluffy golden retriever brought a community together, and made life seem a bit brighter to any who happen to hear the story. The gesture goes deeper than an opportunity to pet a friendly dog. The community and families that put the event together and set up the website have effectively communicated a message of support and charity through their efforts. Sometimes, the smaller and simpler acts of kindness are what turn the tide for someone who may be struggling.