

Editorial: Dreaming of a better day for Caddo Lake

Marshall News Messenger 07-25-04

What could you do with a million dollars? More specifically, what could we do with a million dollars if we used it to enhance Caddo Lake?

We don't know the answer to that question, but we can dream about it. Unfortunately, dream is all we can do. That amount of money, if not more has been spent by the various sides fighting a court battle over the lake.

And the spending has only just begun.

While we don't bear any animosity for the legal profession, that money has mostly gone to attorneys who live far away and have nothing other than a casual business interest in the future of the lake.

But just imagine what could be done if, instead of fighting one another, we had pledged three years ago to pool the resources of the Caddo Lake Coalition and the city of Marshall and anyone else who has an interest in the lake.

Is it just possible that with that money — and the money that is going to be spent over the next several years — all the concerns of both the city and the coalition could have been solved without having to be at odds in a court battle?

We believe that it is.

Indeed, we believe that the issues involved could have been settled for less money, certainly less that will eventually be spent.

Even if the difference would not be much in terms of money, there is a much higher cost to all of these battles than mere cash. That all attracts our attention because it eventually comes out of our wallets.

But there is a cost of things that have not been done, the cost of what could not be accomplished. This is incalculable since we don't know what opportunities might have been missed over the last three years. We will never know.

We do know that Marshall lost the ability to sell water to Entergy and that could have been a substantial benefit to the city during these times of tight budgets.

Incredibly (and thankfully) Marshall has grown during this time period. This is due to the efforts and vision of many. Because of them and much hard work, we hope the good fortune will continue.

But it is possible to make our own good fortune and one way of doing that is to solve this frustrating water problem.

Marshall has received much publicity over this water battle and not much of it has been in a positive light.

We could have a different story to tell, however. We could tell the story of overcoming differences, working together, putting aside suspicion and doubts, hurdling obstacles and beating the odds.

It is never too late for that to be our story. We cannot change the past, but we can surely change the course of the future.

It begins with the a dream: Just what could we do with a million dollars?