Sometimes when I'm spending most of my Saturday cutting grass and working in the yard, I wish I could just do it once and be done for the summer.

I suppose I could do that, but I'm sure I'd have some unhappy neighbors and one very unhappy wife when the place started looking like a jungle.

Many of the problems facing Yazoo today are a result of someone "taking the summer off" when there's ongoing work to be done.

One of the most often discussed topics today is the poor condition of our local parks with restrooms in disrepair and routine field maintenance neglected. These are issues that wouldn't exist if our leaders weren't asleep at the wheel.

During the last Mayor and Board of Aldermen meeting Ward 1 Alderman Charles "Mickey" O'Reilly called for cleaning up Brame Park. I am in total agreement with him that it needs it, but what Mr. O'Reilly doesn't seem to realize (or at least want to admit) is that the park has declined over the past decade, which is the same amount of time he has represented the ward in which it is located.

I used to enjoy taking my lunch to Brame Park to eat rather than sitting inside, but the park has gone downhill considerably since those days.

Another example is Main Street, where the Mississippi Development Authority made significant investments in the form of a grant to this city to improve downtown Yazoo.

Today the brick sidewalks are uneven and potentially dangerous in some places, some of the new light poles haven't been replaced after being damaged and at least one of the large planters has visible damage. The music from the sound system was recently cut off after the bill went unpaid.

Just like I would be hearing from my wife if I shut down the lawn mower for the summer to focus on leisure activities full time, it's time for local leadership to start hearing from the taxpayers. We have to get their attention.

In the meantime the good news is that we don't really have to wait around for politicians to make good things happen in our community.

Soon after residents started voicing concerns about the state of our parks, volunteers began offering their services. Coach Johnny Staples says he has had many people contact him to offer

support in his volunteer efforts.
There's also plenty of positive activity downtown, and none of it has anything to do with the government. Jet and Vernette Griffin have brought tremendous new activity with the Downtown Marketplace and across the street Jeff Curtis has done the same thing with TCTI Fitness. Paul and JoAnn Adams continue to make major investments in their downtown buildings. Frank Webb at Webb's Pharmacy is upgrading his system and expanding because he is confident in the future of his downtown business.
The momentum is there, and it's just a matter of time before more good things happen downtown.
But it would be a lot easier to market Yazoo to new business if we took the time to pay attention to the basic maintenance details. It would also ensure that the local taxpayers are getting what they're paying for.
Taking pride in our city is a year-round job.