

The Doom Loop: Rural Schools Importance to Sustainability of Rural Communities

Angela and Mike's story is compelling and hard on our community for sure.

There's a name for this: It's called a Doom Loop. A Doom Loop is where a bunch of bad things cycle back on themselves making the situation worse and worse. Child's Way school is an example of the Doom Loop happening here, **in our neighborhoods**, right now.

Here's what it is: We don't have a **fire district**, so the school can't get **insurance**. Without **insurance** you can't have a **school**. So, those **jobs** at the school are **lost** and the teachers move away. No teachers and no school, so **families with kids** also **move away** or don't move here in the first place, and the community becomes a **drought** of renewal. Outsiders see this 'drought' and choose to move elsewhere. **Lack of services perpetuates the Doom Loop** and the cycle spreads and repeats itself throughout a community, often slowly but it still happens.

Do we want this? I think not!!

There **are** examples of the good in our community all around us that show the way out of a Doom Loop:

Some examples:

The Sunshine Club.

All of the amazing **school teachers** who are the glue of our community

The Up River Food Pantry,

Dorena School Parent Club,

Jim/Tammy Eckstein and the Water Board—countless hours of work to keep much of us in drinking water

The unknown loggers who chain sawed the road open to town and all the **neighbors helping neighbors**, during **Snowpocalypse**.

Churches that offer spiritual and communal places of worship.

Dan Holt and George Swain raising the awareness of fire danger in our community.

Reta Cochrane who **single handedly** risked her life to save the Dorena School and children from a **school fire** in 2014.

Scott Byler who said '**we can be better than this**'—and galvanized us to this point in time, that we are here today to solve a community problem.



Community is what breaks the Doom Loop!! If you don't believe me you had better look around. All those who are volunteering as fire responders and all others who are offering to contribute to the cause, please stand and be recognized. (*clap*)

Our Community has the skills, talents, and abilities to change our valley for the better. I can't believe how much our little community has changed already in the short time since we all started working to this goal—new and old connections becoming stronger and wider. When this happens, we see that the cycle of change can actually turn faster and faster **but for the better**.

The **Row River Fire District** and the **Row River Community Fire Hall**—those are great names and say it all.

So-- lemme tell you-----

When that Fire Station goes up, I want it to say over the entrance:

'We Built This'

Thank you all who are committed to making this happen!!

Now Lets get to Work!!!

