

*Binge Watching* - Now there's a term I never learned while growing up. But now I'm doing it all the time... probably too much. This is one of those chronic behaviors that really can make you go blind!

I know there are a few of you out there that still don't subscribe to some kind of streaming service like Netflix or Amazon Prime, so for your benefit, *Binge Watching* is the practice of watching multiple episodes of a TV program at one sitting, sometimes over an entire week-end, or watching them night after night over a period of time.

With me, because of spousal influence, my binge watching started with *Downton Abbey* and all those other British shows about Queen Victoria, or Queen Elizabeth, or some such other British thing... not exactly the manliest way to burn a week-end.

However, I began discovering some pretty gritty guy-friendly British stuff on Netflix – guys should check out *Peaky Blinders* for some serious guns, grit and language, or if you are into hunting and the outdoors, *Meat Eater* is amazing. But I digress...

Yes, I know this is a mayor's column, and I really didn't mean for this to become a TV Critic's column. But I had to explain how I came about binging on something that really got me thinking about this city – in a fun and amusing way.

Last summer, a friend mentioned a television series he and his family had watched for years called *Parks and Recreation*. I'd heard of the series, but I had never watched it, even though it had run for 6 years on network TV. He said that I, as a city official, would really enjoy it and relate to it. So, one night, I queued it up on Netflix and started watching, and eventually binging... on 120 episodes! No, I didn't do them all at one time – it took about 3 months.

The show takes place in a fictional town called Pawnee, Indiana, and its central characters are the staff of the Parks and Recreation Department. Pawnee is a small town, like Seguin, and it is constantly being ridiculed and upstaged by a neighboring small town called Eagleton. The Pawnee city officials are always being hounded by their citizens about how Pawnee needs to be more like Eagleton. Does that sound familiar? (I refuse to mention the name of that town up Highway 46 with the initials N.B.)

Pawnee has a reverence for its history and founding, and has murals and statues that sometime draw controversy from some citizens. Sound familiar? Pawnee even has a diner called JJ's!

Apart from all the coincidences I just mentioned, I can identify personalities and behaviors in virtually every citizen of Pawnee that can be applicable to someone I know here in Seguin. It's uncanny. I'm not going to get specific comparing any of the characters, because that will get me into trouble. But I guarantee you will see a little bit of someone in Seguin in every citizen of Pawnee.

One of the best parts about the show is that as quirky and weird as the characters are, and no matter how many times the town takes a back seat to Eagleton, they never stop trying to improve their town. They never stop believing in themselves and their town. And here is a spoiler alert... the snooty and elitist snobs of Eagleton finally get their comeuppance when their city goes bankrupt, and gets annexed by Pawnee!

The series eventually "jumps the shark" in the last season when the main character, Leslie Knope, gets elected to Congress, and the show descends into nauseating political correctness. So just watch the first 100 episodes or so and get a fun and kooky look at a town that could very well be Seguin, Texas.

Gosh I love this town!

