

# Thumbs Up and Down

Post-Crescent Editorial Board 6:45 p.m. CDT August 7, 2015

**Thumbs Up:** To Appleton, for putting on a great party this week.

Mile of Music is obviously an amazing event, but the way city officials and community members embrace it is what really makes the festival go above and beyond.

Think about how cool it is to see hundreds of acts for free in a non-corporatized environment. Where else can you get that?

To everyone who behaved nicely and kept this town's stellar reputation intact, thank you. To everyone who made the musicians feel welcome, good job. To business owners who enhanced the festival, you're awesome, too.

To those who stuck it out during the rain, you rock.

We'll see you for Mile 4.

**Thumbs Up:** To a program that puts books in the hands of young patients.

A \$50,000 grant from the United Way Fox Cities to the Appleton Public Library has expanded the Reach Out and Read program. That means doctors will be able to hand kids a book when they come in for well-child exams.

Doctors typically focus on growth patterns and sleep and eating habits, but this gives them an "in" to talk to parents and kids about literacy. Doctors also get the chance to see how kids use the books to determine how familiar they are with them.

You can help as well. Book donations are accepted at libraries, YMCA of the Fox Cities branches and Half-Price Books. Cash or checks to Friends of the Appleton Public can be dropped off at the Appleton Public Library as well.

**Thumbs Down:** To the news that the homeless population in the Fox Cities has grown.

The number of people who were on the streets, in one of the three local shelters and in transitional housing increased from 330 to 362. Chris Lashock, client services coordinator for Homeless Connections, is right when he says that's "startling and rather frightening."

The average stay at Homeless Connections has grown from 28 days in 2011 to 40 now.

Obviously, there isn't a simple answer. We have agencies working hard to help as many people as they can, but still some fly under the radar. We truly respect the work they do.

But it's still disheartening.