

## Our City

As I shoveled the walk for the second time in five days this morning I was reminded of last winter and the effects that still linger here from it. The near-record snowfall was good and bad; both are still being felt. Recreation this last summer at Willow Bay and on the reservoir was up significantly over anytime available in my memory. Recharge to the Eastern Snake River Plain Aquifer continues even as I write this and has for nearly the entire year. In the big picture kind of way that in itself has been almost invaluable as the measure of the year that was goes. It's too soon to tell what this winter will bring; but so far the water year looks encouraging. I know the odd summer and fall we had created some challenges unique for those who raise our prized potatoes as well. As a city, like our farmers, we have little immediate control over what the weather does. All we can do is try and manage its effects.

The snow and cold temperatures from last winter left the City with \$500,000 in damage to our streets. Our street department has barely scratched the surface of the repairs yet to be done. The good news is that once this winter subsides, the emergency relief funds we have received and are scheduled to receive in the months to come will allow for the repair and replacement of at least everything that was damaged last year. With a little luck the damage done to our streets this winter will confine itself to the areas that are scheduled to be fixed this coming spring and summer.

As I look to the coming spring and summer I am optimistic that recreational use at Willow Bay and the surrounding areas will continue to increase. I am encouraged by the fact that several of you have expressed an interest in helping staff our golf clubhouse, as the City has decided to maintain its operation with seasonal help. It is my intent to have applications available shortly after the first of the year so that employees can be hired and a tentative work schedule established well in advance of the season and planned summer vacations. Once the season starts we will need personnel to staff the clubhouse 10-14 hours per day through October. Depending on the hours individuals are able to work we are looking to hire at least four employees, possibly more. Folks who want to work from the beginning of the season through the close will also have the opportunity to see what it's like outside on a mower and what it takes to make ours one of the nicest courses in the area.

As I continued to shovel this morning I thought of the year that was. While no major changes occurred in regard to the City and its management the face of our City and community will be changed for a long time because of your willingness to invest in our collective future. Thank you for seeing the wisdom of passing the Water Bond that expanded long-term water rights for Power County. Thank you for once again choosing to invest in our children and their future by passing a bond for a new Intermediate School. Also, thanks for your foresight in funding the much needed overhaul and remodeling of our hospital; thus insuring state of the art medical care for our community. And, while he wasn't elected by the community my thanks goes to the American Falls School Board of Trustees for their selection of our new Superintendent Randy Jensen. I am excited and encouraged by his and the Board's vision and goals for our School District's future; the effects of which will be life changing to our kids.

Until next year...