

Our City

Is it possible to become that which you detest? I was into my fourth day of fishing with my dear friend Al Goetz who was on family leave in Pocatello from Hastings, Nebraska when I started to ponder that question. Three days prior to that I helped three young fishermen catch and land fish the size of long-term memories. I hadn't been so lucky with Al. On the third day I took him to a place I don't take anyone and on two consecutive casts he landed a male and female rainbow the size of steelhead. Most often nature or God has a way of putting me deservedly in my place. I had caught fish all four days but none that were really "that fish." As I watched Al fish where I know big fish dwell I was just going through the motions, not really in the moment. As I look back I had become what I detest on a trout stream; a big fish hunter and in no small way jaded. The fish gods intervened and promptly put me in my place.

Too often we go through life just like that wanting something bigger and better, jaded, not appreciating what we have. As I drove home from a meeting in Boise last Tuesday my thoughts went forward to the FIRED UP meeting that I was trying not to be late for. This afterschool program is designed to help students who may be struggling, who don't come from means, or who just need a structured environment after school and some caring soul willing to help them become better. I am excited about the coming six months for the students in this program as multiple community-centered activities were developed for our youth. Look for announcements from the program director, Kimberly Walker, in-school mailings and the Power County Press each month to see how you can help too. Any contribution will be welcomed.

On one other school note my congratulations go out to the girls' varsity basketball team who earned their first win of the season last Thursday night at Westside. For some on the team it was their first basketball win ever. Many along the way had accepted losing as a given and quit the program; to those who have chosen to persevere I say well done and congratulations!

To the City personnel who pitched in and helped get the Christmas lights up through this last week's off and on weather I extend my thanks and that of the community as well. If you have a golfer in your family the club house will be open from 11:00 am. to 1:00 pm. Monday through Thursday until December 21 if you want to give a season pass, punch card or equipment and accessories as a gift; I am sure hard to get or special orders could be provided for as well.

As Al and I returned to town from fishing yesterday we were just in time to see Santa Claus arrive in a helicopter at 3:00 pm. I am told by those who would know that reindeer can only fly at night; so Santa uses a helicopter during the day. As Saint Nicholas' arrival marked the beginning of the Lighting the Spirit Within Festival I filled with a sense of pride as much of our community took part in the event sponsored by the Chamber of Commerce and supported by many of our community's churches and businesses. I am sorry to say I missed one of my favorite parts, the readers theater in the Library, but very much enjoyed the art display in between watching my grandchildren build ginger bread houses at the Assembly of God church, the trolley ride, the nativity scene and the great food and drink. But, as I settled into a pew at Saint John's for the Christmas Choir Festival peace settled with me. I look forward to this one hour every year because it represents to me what is best in us...religion doesn't matter, no one cares about ethnicity or status, we are simply one community of many people joined by

whatever spirit we find within ourselves. As I watched parents stand and hold their small children teaching them the words to Silent Night I felt a sense of welling being and contentment, something far different than the jaded feeling I had only a few hours previous. Oftentimes we lose track of what is truly important in life; we become jaded with the day-to-day and forget each day is a gift unto itself. Over the course of this holiday season and the coming year my wish for each of you is just that; live the gift you were given.

On the weekend of December 15th and 16th those who would know will be out with me to enjoy all of your Christmas and Holiday decorations. The results will be published in the December 20th edition of the Power County Press. I wish each of you the very best this Holiday Season and hope too that you can light the spirit within.

Until next week...