

## Our City

The more I write this column the more it seems that although the content week-to-week changes often the theme of the thing seems to be a only a slightly different version of something I had written about previously. Which could mean one of three things I suppose: my knowledge of what is actually happening is limited, things really never change, or there are actually common threads that hold us together and make most things work. Believing that knowledge and experience are co-factors yet not always synonymous and that very little ever stays the same, I see common threads throughout almost everything I associate with. Thus, the similarity in themes from time-to-time.

As I worked through last week the theme without question was “we.” As in “We the people...” Little if anything gets done in our community without the help and support of our neighbors and partners. Take the Gerald Fehringer Youth Center for example. The youth center is funded by donations from community members and partners; the City being one of those partners. This year they found out that while they are staffed by volunteers they are required to carry disability and liability insurance; costs they were not prepared to pay. So the youth center finds themselves about \$2000 short of being able to stay open through September and the start of another fiscal year. I wrote last week about the measure of a society is how we treat our children. Like the Fired-Up program I wrote about last week, the youth center accommodates hundreds of children. If you have the ability and willingness, I ask that you contact Bob Schrieber to see how you can help. I will be.

Like the Gerald Fehringer Youth Center our now annual summer Music in the Park is the result of another of our wonderful community volunteers. Tammy Ramsey was at last week's City Council meeting to request the use of the south city park for this summer's events. Bands and sponsors have been lined up to begin June 1<sup>st</sup> and continue each Thursday evening from 6:00 to 9:00 through August 10<sup>th</sup>. Parks Superintendent Chris Fehringer and I met with Tammy a few weeks ago to hash out ideas for a stage in the south park. Before too long the dilapidated roof and railing that is now a part of the gazebo will be taken down before it falls down. The initial stage will be built with funds donated by Troy Brazelton. The stage will be designed to surround the concrete of the old gazebo; much like the old stage of the Grand Old Opry is incorporated into the newer structure. The stage will be further designed so that additions can be easily attached as more funding becomes available. Thank you Tammy and Troy for your great ideas, volunteerism and generosity! If music in the park or possible theater in the park is something you have an interest in, talk to Tammy about how you can help.

Work at the tennis courts is under way; yet, another joint partnership project sponsored by both public and private donations. When work halted due to weather last fall the budget for the new courts was very tight. Depending on how costs come in for the asphalt sub-court and the polyurethane court itself, we will determine whether enough funding has been garnered or not. It will be close. Regardless, we are proceeding with the excavation and rebuilding. If for some reason funding is short and something that can't be overcome with volunteers or material donations I could be asking for other type of donations. As a reminder donations to AF Impact or the Education Foundation Board are tax deductible and both are partners in this project.

You may well be wondering, “What ever happened to the emergency access road to Willow Bay?” You would not be alone in that quandary; I too have wondered the same thing. Due to the amount and cost of repairs to our city streets and county roads noticeable work on that project will not begin until this fall and conclude in 2018. I need to thank our partners at the County Highway Department, the Department of Federal Lands, the Bureau of Reclamation and the Idaho Department of Transportation for their extended cooperation and support of this project as together we try and stave off our inability to properly respond to a potential emergency around the Willow Bay recreational area.

It has long been my experience that it is “We the people” that make better things possible; truth be known I am rather fond of that theme.

Until next week...