

Our City

At 11:00 o'clock the day couldn't have been more perfect; 85 degrees with a slight breeze out of the northwest. The pages of my notes ruffled a bit in the three-ring binder on the music stand that held it as I stood on the deck of the flatbed trailer before the largest group of people I had ever spoken to. Though tears filled my eyes most of the time the beauty of the day was not lost on me. As I spoke through the middle of the ceremony a bouquet of flowers fell unexpectedly from the arena railing. As I spoke through tear filled eyes a young boy quietly left his seat encouraged by no one, climbed down the bleachers to the fallen flowers. He reverently pick them up and placed them back in their place. In doing so an individual flower fell away from the bouquet; again he gently picked it up then placed it back in the arrangement. After, he quietly returned to his seat. My heart plucked as it was exactly the type of thing the young man we were honoring would have done.

I didn't recognize the boy; but I commend his parents on a job well done. I would like to meet the boy who saved the flowers one day and shake his hand. He reminded me too of the high school students absent from school who sat in the blue and gold jackets also honoring and mourning the loss of their friend. Their parents also did it right. I don't remember my exact remarks as I was a bit lost in the fog of the moment as I closed my remarks and the celebration of the life of Neil Andersen but the gist was that when Sally and I moved our family here nearly 30 years ago we hoped but didn't know that American Falls would be a welcoming community; one that supported its members through thick and thin, in times of need, sorrow and loss. The outpouring of love and support for Neil and his family in a word was, glorious. We all make decisions every so often that affect the rest our lives; Sally and I chose well. And, once again I would like to thank the entire community for all that was done for Neil's family; you make me so very proud and at the same time humble and in awe.

In the vein of thanks; yet totally unrelated, the City extends its thanks to Nolan Buffi for donating much of the final preparations for the gravel base of the new tennis courts prior to the asphalt being installed by Parsons. It certainly wasn't anything he had to do; but, his contributions will make more possible with the funds available to us.

On a similar note the next time you are in City Hall you will notice new chairs in our foyer and a new conference table and chairs in the Council Chambers. Hand-me-downs; compliments of the Idaho State Police. They look new, but who am I to look a gift horse in the mouth? My thanks go to Captain Daley of the ISP for making our building more inviting and comfortable for those we serve.

Finally, my extended thanks to one of our community's preeminent volunteers, Tammy Ramsey and Mike Ferguson. The concrete for the new stage in the park will be poured through donations of funds and labor. If anyone has a 6" trencher that they would be willing to lend the project for half a day that would help immensely. The concrete will cure over the course of the fall and winter. Like the tennis courts, final construction will be complete next spring. Mike has designed a very nice enclosed structure to be placed on the concrete and will be working with an acoustical engineer this winter to make sure it will accommodate both musical and theatrical performances. Well done Tammy and Mike! Like the boy saving the flowers you most certainly make American Falls the very best place to live. **Until next week...**

The above I wrote two weeks ago but because of my schedule and last week's Labor Day weekend didn't get it submitted on time to publish; but as this past week was fairly uneventful by comparison it worked out. Although it worked out as I talked with Clerk Robyn Herndon at 4:30 last Friday with only three candidates having submitted petitions for City Council and one for mayor; all are incumbents. As Robyn and I chatted and reviewed all the previous ballots with the exception of one election in the past 12 years there has always been a choice for at least the Council positions. I suppose I understand that public service is not everyone's cup of tea; but, I am not naive enough to think that all of you are completely satisfied with the job the seven of us are doing on behalf of the City. I welcome and encourage each of you whether you are of voting age or not to at some point make the effort to talk to me or a councilmember about your concerns or the things you think we are doing right. Personally, I don't take the absence of public input as a job well done. You will find us all receptive and open to suggestions and your valued input will help us all continue to make American Falls the best place to live.

Until next week...