

Our City

Seldom if ever do two wrongs make a right; and sometimes Karma and the Fish Gods are there to reinforce the matter. That about sums up last week. But, I should fill in the blanks. As of the Saturday before last, Sally had been gone to Mexico to visit her folks for seven days. She wasn't due home for five more, and I had settled into a minimalist mentality at home. The weather was too nice to fish so I spent most of my free time outside doing yard work. Up until last Monday that is, then I felt the pull of moving water and despite the blue sky and 60 degree weather, I went fishing with Paul. We were not alone, there were eight of us in a quarter mile stretch, and then there were five of us within 50 yards. The three of them moved right in on top of Paul and me, barely a rod length away. It didn't sit well with either the Judge or me. I started thinking about the yard work I had left undone as I marveled at the complete lack of stream etiquette or simple manners.

I hadn't gotten to trimming my trees yet, as I cleaned out all the perennial flower beds and raked the blown in leaves from early winter. I knew it needed to be done as I still have the letter sent out by Street Superintendent Dusty Whited last fall. Dusty and his crew will be trimming trees that overhang the street and alleys and impede access to your garbage can pick up and for service and emergency vehicles through alleys. Of course you can save them the effort and trim your own trees in a manner that is acceptable to you, which is stated politely in the letter you received. In that same vein the extra-large garbage cans are available for your use as you begin your spring cleaning, if you have no way to haul things to the dump. Give Debbie Erickson a call at City Hall and she can get you signed up for the delivery and pick up of the can.

Pete Cortez, the Water and Waste Water Superintendent, and his crew are flushing sewers and will begin exercising your residential water valves this week as part of their general maintenance regime. The truck that is used to flush the sewer lines has probably outlived its useful life, as it is broke down more than it is in service. Common practice by other municipalities is to replace this type of truck about every ten years. Ours has been in service for 15. Council President Hammond and I met with Pete last week to discuss the complete rebuild of our existing truck or the purchase of a new one as it spends more time in with Larry Wright in the City shop than performing its intended purpose. The other piece of equipment that the three of us believe is a priority is a camera trailer. The camera associated with the trailer is capable of navigating all of our sewer lines and documenting their various states of repair or integrity through a video recording. This tool would allow Pete to prioritize maintenance and replacement of sections of sewer line before they collapse and cause raw sewage to backup into homes. The price tag on the two pieces of equipment is \$400,000-\$500,000. No they aren't cheap, which is why the entire Council will be discussing their merits.

The golf carts that we have leased to own seem to be working well. In fact they seem to be working too well. Reports are they are quite speedy. They do have a governor on them and it will be adjusted to accommodate a safer, more leisurely rate of travel. The clubhouse is looking good and should have a complete inventory by the end of this week. With luck our beer license will be issued within the next ten days or so. I happened to stop by one day last week and found Jim and Debbie Tiede along with Shane and Kim West, on the patio. Kim had

a really cool idea and we discussed the possibility of night golf with Denny. Details will follow as a plan is developed. Not being a golfer, I had heard of night putting but never associated it with real golfing. Live and learn. The Golf Committee will be meeting the first part of April so if you have issues, please relay them to Jim Tiede, Kim West, Charlie Woodworth, Brianna Koompin, Councilpersons Hofmeister or Love, Denny or myself.

There is a Trail Committee meeting scheduled for this Thursday at City Hall from 4:00 to 6:00 pm. I would expect most of the governmental and corporate stakeholders to be there along with several private property owners. The results of the online survey will be discussed as well as the next steps in the process of getting the trail established and usable. I remain excited by the possibility of where this trail may take us.

I was excited five years ago as Mayor Amy Manning and I began working with the Fish and Game to get the river below the dam open to year-round fishing. There have been times since that I have wondered at the wisdom of that endeavor. Paul frequently reminds me that it is all my fault that so many people have found out what a world class fishery we have. Yesterday was no exception as we and Shannon Lance, a new science teacher at AFHS, found ourselves at river's edge and saw a lone fisherman in "our hole." Usually I avoid people on the river, but I was still festering from Monday as I led the way out to a proximity that was decidedly too close to the fisherman. He left with a parting sharp comment on stream etiquette. He was right, of course. The Fish Gods took notice as well as I shortly thereafter lost two very nice fish before bringing them to my net. Then I lost a fly to a rock on the bottom. Karma can be a bitch, but it can't be avoided. Immediately after I reeled in and told Paul I needed to go apologize to the fisherman, at which point he said he would do it since he was the one who got yelled at. Tempers were soothed while wrongs stood righted as Karma and the Fish Gods were appeased bringing fish to net and hand, then to slowly slip away. Seldom if ever are Karma and the Fish Gods wrong.

Until next week...