

Our City

Mayor Beitia asked me (Dan Hammond) to write his column for the Power County Press this week as he is out of town on an FFA excursion to Moscow with 31 students. I have been reading the Mayor's columns for several months and as each one unfolds, I question, how is he able to keep coming up with topics for all these columns? I think I am about to find out!

I have known Mayor Beitia for several years, but it wasn't until we were elected to the City Council in 2005 that I really got to know him well! He is truly a man of numerous talents. As a school teacher he is well prepared, has amazing teaching skills, and is really great with young people. He is able to get these malleable students to set and accomplish great goals and find strengths they didn't even know they had.

Mr. Beitia's FFA program is second to none. The American Falls High School FFA program has received the highest award in the state for 2 years in a row and has been in the top tier for several years. His students are always in leadership positions in District FFA and this year 2015-2016 one of his students, Riely Geritz, is serving as the Idaho State FFA President! This is a very prestigious position and requires huge personal effort and dedication to achieve this office.

Several members of the community serve on the FFA advisory board to help with the planning and direction of the FFA program. Kam Koopin, Tommy Brown, Patty Porath, Kimi Taylor, and myself are some of the community members who help. We also have Rick Phillips of Simplot and Senator Jim Guthrie as members of this advisory group. Together we have been working on a grant to get the Chapter some extra money to help carry on the Ag program here in American Falls.

All of these School and FFA activities are only part of Mayor Beitia's responsibilities. As Mayor he has overseen numerous City improvements. Some of these improvements were started by previous Mayor Amy Manning, but with her moving to Pocatello, Marc Beitia became the Mayor and has brought these programs to fruition. The new state of the art Waste Water Treatment Plant will be completed and have the ribbon cutting on June 11, 2015 from 3:00-5:00 pm at the new treatment plant location. Superintendent Pete Cortez and his capable staff are putting the finishing touches on the facility. You will be impressed! Please come and take part in this great accomplishment for the City of American Falls.

We all have enjoyed the newly revitalized downtown with new lights, sidewalks, streets, trees and foliage. This was a huge project and Mayor Beitia made sure, personally, that everything was done properly. The entire City workforce was involved to the max to have it turn out the best it could be.

There are several other projects that have been completed in the past years that are helping make American Falls "The Best Place to Live". The new skateboard park and improvements at Willow Bay are just a couple that come to mind.

The bottom line is that Marc Beitia is a Class Act, he works tirelessly for this community and it is my great privilege to call him my friend and we are all lucky to have him as a member of our community!

The consent agenda is at the beginning of every City Council meeting. That allows several items to be voted on with one motion and saves some time during the meeting. If any council member desires to have additional discussion on any consent agenda item, it can be held and discussed further. At our last council meeting this happened; Councilmember Workman held a motion to grant the school district the right to use Lee Street Park, Vard Meadows Park, and the Main City Park for the "Lunch in the Park" program. This program is run by the American Falls School District under the very capable direction of Ms. Lisa Krell and provides a free lunch to any children between the ages of 8 and 18. All they have to do is come to the any of the parks at noon and pick up their lunch. The rules require them to consume the lunch in the park and keep the parks cleaned up. John and Mary Annen came to the council meeting to make us aware that there has been some vandalism of the new trees at the parks and that the cleanup wasn't what it should have been. The City Sanitation Department picks up the garbage containers 3 times per week and if necessary more cans can be added. We would ask that parents talk to their children about their responsibility for clean up, and would also ask the parents who come with their children to help make sure things get cleaned up properly. This is a wonderful program and provides a good meal to children who may not always get a good meal. As a City, anything that promotes use of our facilities makes American Falls the best place to live.

It's official, we have our first triple crown winner in 37 years! There are a variety of records that don't get broken very often because they are really difficult to break and that is as it should be. Sometimes once a record is broken, because we now know it can be broken, others best the time, and it takes some time to establish a new benchmark that is hard to achieve. For example, the 4 minute mile was a barrier that had stood for years. In 1954 an Englishman, Roger Bannister was the first to run a sub 4 minute mile. His time was 3:59.4. Since that time almost 17 seconds have been taken from that record. The old adage "records are made to be broken" is certainly true. We have cause to be proud of one of our own, Maria Sanchez, a 19 year old girl from American Falls who has given us cause to cheer. She has been chosen to play soccer for the Women's Mexican National Soccer Team in the upcoming Woman's World Cup Soccer competition. In her own words, "This is a big achievement, I never imagined it would happen this quick. It is such a big accomplishment, especially because I am so young." It is a big achievement because of her age! In reality it's like setting a record that won't be broken any time soon. Congratulations Maria!! I know many of us from American Falls will be watching and cheering her for her talent and accomplishment!

We have so much to be thankful for here in American Falls! We have a community that comes together to serve each other, we have a wonderful school system that educates our children. We have people who extend themselves to make a difference. We have growth potential, great outdoor recreational opportunities, and a good infrastructure. We truly believe in our Core Purpose!

City of American Falls Core Purpose

Provide leadership and value to the residents of American Falls by preserving and wisely using assets of the city, by maintaining a platform of creation, sustainability and growth while being fiscally responsible, innovative and forward thinking with the ultimate goal of making "American Falls the best place to live."