

Our City

It was hard to tell the paid professionals from the volunteers as I stood in the freezing cold watching two ambulances loaded and driven away. It was Thanksgiving as I watched our first responders consisting of police, emergency medical technicians and firemen do their job the way I expected it to be done when life is in the balance. As I drove the survivor to Harms Memorial Hospital, it was difficult to know exactly how to feel; sad and broken hearted for the tragedy that was unfolding or proud to somehow be associated with such wonderful and selfless people here in American Falls. Regardless, even on a miserable day such as this I was thankful.

Thankful for more than the people that may have saved the lives clinging to a thread. Thankful for more than knowing that while we are a small town, we are served by those who truly live the moral choice and value of service above self. While not all are war veterans, some are; as first responders they all have seen their share of death and destruction. They are often taken for granted or worse. That is until we need them of course. Then they can't do everything right fast enough. I get it. Often we, collectively, are so wrapped up in our own lives that we fail to recognize and be thankful for those who make our way of life possible. From those who insure our drinking water is safe to the first responders who knowingly pass through the door where death awaits. Beyond the construct and concepts of this great nation, beyond family and friends, it is each other that we should be thankful for.

Thank you to the City, County and State road crews who took time away from their families on Thanksgiving to make our roads passable. I apologize to the businesses and other property owners if our City that snow removal efforts did not meet your expectations. The department remains short one person as we are in the process of hiring. It won't fix last week's possible shortcomings but I have written previously several City employees are working towards their CDL drivers licenses so that they may lend a hand on days like this Thanksgiving.

If successful, you will have over 33,000 reasons to be thankful as Superintendent Peirsol and our Street Department submit yet another grant application. This one is another Local Highway Technical Assistance Council (LHTAC) grant for the replacement of all our City signage, 334 signs total. The City's match will include such things as concrete, posts and labor totaling \$4,500. If successful these efforts will total a cost savings to the City of \$33,370.62.

On the flip side this Friday I will be in Boise attending the annual Association of Idaho Cities Legislative Committee meeting where State official and legislators will inform us of what is potentially on the docket for the coming 2016 legislative session. The agenda shows everything from beef, dairy and water regulations by the Department of Environmental Quality to taxes and wages. Our own Senator Guthrie has been serving on a bipartisan Legislative Ad Hoc Tax Working Group which has been examining such things as the Personal Property Tax Exemption, Income Tax Rates and the Sales Tax on Groceries; I am interested to hear the preliminary findings of the group and appreciate their efforts.

The two lives rescued on Thanksgiving Day still hang in the balance. Tomorrow is not a promise, show your thanks each day for what you have and what others have done for you. My thanks to our first responders who even on a miserable day made American Falls the best place to live.

Until next week...