

Our City

There is not much I like less than being the bad guy or the cause of hate and discontent unless it is being taken advantage of and played for a chump. There comes a time, for me at least, when enough is enough. A few years ago the City Council considered at my suggestion a new parking ordinance in our downtown area. It was met with some public resistance. Instead of forcing the issue I agreed to work with local business owners, who then chose to continuously park their business vehicles on public streets and in areas of City right-of-ways. In some cases, this makes the streets unserviceable and impassable for City equipment. I am talking specifically about Roosevelt, Idaho, and Harrison Streets between Oregon Trail and Tyhee, along with the alleys that service those street-front businesses. I have instructed Police Chief Brandon Wilkinson to contact the business owners one more time in hopes they will comply and move their business off the public streets. I have further asked him to contact Police Chief Scott March and of Pocatello to see how they work with businesses in keeping private property off Pocatello streets and to see how their ordinances are written to prohibit parking between the hours of 1:00 or 2:00 and 6:00 in the morning so that City street crews have a window that they can work unobstructed in their downtown.

I don't think I am being unreasonable in this request. As a matter of fact the vast majority of businesses are extremely mindful of our streets and do what is necessary to keep them clear and unobstructed outside of business hours. These businesses would not be affected one way or the other if parking restrictions came to pass. I look forward to a healthy discussion on the matter going forward; my door at City Hall is open if you have suggestions or comments.

You will have read or heard by now that there was a Special City Council meeting this Monday at 5:00 pm. The Council discussed items related to the Willow Bay Café and Campground; specifically how to best proceed in making both viable again. By this time next week I should be able to give you our plan to do just that. As a City we remain hopeful that both the café and campground will be fully operational by the end of March. We have purchased campground management software that will allow for online reservations to begin soon; this is the same software that Jennifer Carroll used when she managed the campground. I am not sure if credit card payments will be available through the online site or City Hall but we are discussing both options depending on whether the City manages the campground or not. I will know more in a week and report back to you.

I want to give you a quick report on the Simplot Games that took place last week in Holt Arena. Our own Kodee Vining placed in the top 12 in a field of over 250 athletes in the 200 meter dash. The Simplot Games traditionally sees the best high school athletes in the nation and world. Kodee did remarkably well! Other American Falls FFA members worked in the "Fast and the Farmers" photo booth where at the request of the Simplot Company the FFA members taught the track athletes a little bit about J.R. Simplot and agriculture in Idaho and nationally. The twelve FFA members made new friends and had some really good laughs as they talked with over 2000 athletes about "Bringing earth's resources to life." For me it was just cool to watch the interaction of our small town kids and those from a much different background as both sides learned and came to appreciate something new.

I need to thank the following before the fact as they have all agreed to make the Ag and Technology Career Day this Wednesday, February 24th an opportunity of a lifetime for the students of American Falls High School. Those speaking about various careers in our area include the following: From the City of American Falls Brandon Wilkinson (Law Enforcement), Jeremy Peirsol (Public Works), Cody Moldenhauer (Greens Keeper), Isaac Gonzalez (Water & Waste Water); from the performing arts Phillip Shepherd; representing aviation Melvin Wagoner; Erin Hidalgo is the Supervisor for Bingham County 911; from the Bureau of Land Management David Pacioretty; representing Bully Dog we will have Richard, Adrian, and Brent; from the general construction trades Joe Reams; Cosmetology will be represented by Rosemary Martinez; culinary careers will be discussed by Corey Wight, Steven Smith of the DEQ will discuss the Environmental Sciences; Double M's Morgan Nash will be speaking on Ag Sales; Driscoll Potatoes is sending Bill Lasley to discuss farm related careers along with Tyler Driscoll to talk about business management, and Eric Driscoll to discuss careers in trucking and mechanics; John Hunt will inform students about careers in the electrical trades; the Federal Bureau of Investigation will be represented by Cheryl Richards; Idaho Fish & Game's Jim Mende will discuss careers in that agency; the owner of Western Mechanical, Lloyd Herbst, will discuss careers in welding; Hawthorne Animal Clinic is sending Nan Muller a veterinarian and Lisa Cantrell a veterinary technician; the Idaho Conservation Corps will have Joseph Snowdon representing that agency; Idaho Power will have Mike Stokes talk about careers in that company; the Information Systems area will be represented by Jenny Cornell of ISU while Dave Treasure will represent ISU in the welding and diesel areas; JUB Engineering will have Jordon Parker discuss the many opportunities in that area; Lamb Weston will be represented by Frances Beitia as she discusses careers in food science and processing; Nathan Novelty will represent the Armed Services; Monsanto representatives will also be there; Petersen Manufacturing's Jeff Schutte and Dave Dixon will be talking about welding and manufacturing; Seth Lusk will talk about the plumbing trades, Simplot's Rick Phillips will discuss Public Relations & Management, Bruce Hauber will talk about food science and processing, Lane Lankford will speak on sales and management while Todd Johnson of the Don Plant will talk about the welding trades; Stukenholtz Laboratories is sending JP Kruckeberg and Cody McCoy to talk about plant and soils science; our own Hailey Lusk will try and recruit new teachers; and lastly Wells Fargo's Klayton Thornton will be talking about careers in banking.

Over 40 careers will be represented for your children to learn about. Many will be at the evening session also that begins at 5:30 pm. If as parents you want to find out more about what your daughter or son might be interested in as a career, please join us. Scholarships and valuable prizes will go to many of those in attendance. Dinner and dessert will be provided as well at the evening session; the only cost to you is time.

Finally, I would like to invite you as a member of our community and friend of the American Falls FFA Chapter to attend our Annual Appreciation Luncheon from 11:30 to 2:00 pm. on Thursday, February 25th in the Ag Building. Invitations were sent out but invariably folks get missed unintentionally. Please join us; again the only cost is time. I hope to see you there!

Until next week...