

## Our City

The more I read, the more I thought that it just might work. Scott Ploussard, Executive Chef, owned and operated four successful family restaurants, 40+ years of comprehensive management experience, was hired in 2001 by O'Callahan's in Idaho Falls as their Executive Chef and financial trouble shooter, produced a flagship restaurant in 18 months, currently has government clearance at Idaho National Laboratory and launched four cafeterias simultaneously which he still operates. Then I saw the proposed menus for Willow Bay Café. I won't spoil it for you; but you will like it if you like fresh food that is always homemade. I am particularly looking forward to the Friday steak nights and Sunday brunches. Don't expect a big grand opening; the doors will open quietly as word of mouth spreads the truth of food and service. I believe you will be pleasantly surprised by both. Look for a more in-depth interview and story by the Press in the days to come. Welcome to American Falls Scott Ploussard; a place you will love to call home!

As I have been doing my daily walks in and around American Falls, I made a discovery that I found surprising and baffling at the same time. I walk with walking sticks (like ski poles) with carbide tips for good grip in snow and ice; granted those are both gone for now but it is more of a habit now and gives me a bit of an upper body workout too. But, I have noticed as I walk various streets sound different under my sticks; some sound hollow underneath. Why, I wondered? When the sink hole developed on Roosevelt at Hospital Hill the answer was revealed. Many of our City streets are built with "Penepime," an asphalt substitute of sorts Jeff Nelson, the Street Superintendent, tells me. A gravel base is seldom compacted under "Penepime." Oil is poured over a dirt base then gravel is added and another layer of oil is added, then after a few years it is chip sealed for another layer. Most thicknesses of our "Penepime" streets are around an inch and a half to two inches thick. The real asphalt laid on our City streets has been at least three inches thick on a proper foundation of compacted gravel. Some of our "Penepime" streets are in poor shape, like McKinley Street that I wrote about a few weeks ago. It is a maintenance challenge for sure given the repair on Roosevelt's Hospital Hill will cost a bit over \$10,000 to complete and that our total budget line item for street maintenance and repair is about \$80,000 annually. We will do the very best we can with the hand we've been dealt; with luck we may draw to an inside straight in the form of a few more well paying grants.

As I work with business and industry partners to hedge the bets of our children's futures in tomorrow's work force I must once again thank the nearly 60 business and career professionals who gave our American Falls High School students a look at real world career opportunities this past Wednesday at our first annual Ag and Technology Career Day. Several made similar comments that they had never seen or heard of a Career Day like the one held last week. Several returning graduates stated profoundly that they had wished a similar experience would have been provided for them. To quote one businessman, "This is an amazing opportunity that has been provided for these students." It was indeed. Next year's event has been scheduled for February 15 or 22 depending on the School calendar and trimester finals.

To follow up the Career Day on Wednesday of last week the FFA Chapter held its annual Appreciation Luncheon on Thursday in a small effort to thank those that give so much to the program and its students. I would especially like to thank Snake River Cattle and Agri-Beef for

supplying the great hamburgers. Next year the luncheon will be held on the same day as the Career Day in hopes that the luncheon will complement the efforts of those providing the expertise and guidance to all of our students.

As I look back at last week and forward to this one I can say that the wheels have come off my Fitbit goal as planning, scheduling, meetings and interviews are wreaking havoc with my walking. I was 15 miles short of my weekly goal at the end of the day on Saturday. I would like to say I will pound them out this week but Sunday through Wednesday have little time for extended walks in solitude and the black of early morning and evening. But, goals, my goals at least, have to be somewhat flexible. And, as I look back at what was accomplished last week and will be this week I will gladly trade 15 miles for the differences the traded time makes possible.

Until next week...