

## Our City

We have all dealt with them. They become irritating to the point that ignoring them is no longer possible, or comfortable for that matter. So we do what we should have done long ago and deal with it; fix it so it no longer irritates. It just works. In a lot of ways a squeaky wheel and City ordinances are a lot alike. Of late the City has been dealing with a lot of squeaky wheels whether they be ordinances for alleys, dogs, parking or now sidewalks. Waiting until the wheel starts to squeak is not very proactive and dealing with ordinances only when they are complaint-driven or demand attention so that as a City we can provide required services is not efficient or proactive either. Not being proactive on the matter of ordinances came to a head for me at last Wednesday's City Council meeting as the Council debated the merits of the existing sidewalk ordinance and how to address a citizen's complaint regarding trip hazards. This approach hasn't worked in the past and it doesn't work now.

I don't believe that a public meeting where business is to be conducted and decisions made is the place to hash out the minutia and details of a law that is already in effect. It is neither effective nor efficient; those details need to be discussed in a small, well-informed group, and then recommendations should be brought before the Council for timely debate and action. Part of the problem (speaking only for myself) is that I don't know all our City ordinances and what they were originally intended to address and how they could be interpreted today. And, that is no one's fault but my own. I have not made the time to familiarize myself with the contents that fill a four-inch three-ring binder. That stopped last week as I began to read my way through it; and I have asked the City Councilmembers to familiarize themselves with the sections that relate to the departments they currently work with. Over the course of the summer the Council and I will be reviewing the entire code book as we consult with the various department superintendents. Next fall we will start the process of abandoning ordinances that no longer serve a purpose and amending those that squeak or need fixing. I think it is a good maintenance practice, as it educates us as an elected body and it will insure that the ordinances that remain in the code book actually serve a need, are enforceable, and work effectively and efficiently.

With the exception of a few squeaky wheels, American Falls, we are doing better. Two weekends ago three different groups brought sport, tourism and trade to town. A special thank you goes to Todd Winters, Mary Roundy, Kristen Jensen and Kurtis Workman for organizing this spring's Annual Birding Festival. The festival saw a nearly 100% increase in attendance as the attendees identified over 50 species of birds over the course of the day. The group is already planning their Fall event as they continue to build and grow this destination event. Seventy-three teams competed in the Fourth Annual Bow Fishing Tournament on May 14 and 15. Four years ago less than half that number competed. The birders and bow fishermen enjoyed great food and hospitality from Scott Ploussard at the Willow Bay Café; while the campground managed by Tamby and Anthony Gilly looked better than it has in years according to attendees. Also staying at Willow Bay and enjoying the use of our many baseball fields were participants in the Rocky Mountain Super League's Baseball Tournament, with teams from Idaho and Utah participating.

Another sincere thank you goes to Don Johnson and Todd Winters of the American Falls Historical Commission for developing a walking tour of our City's historic homes. Currently

they are developing a map that will be made available to those interested in seeing firsthand the history of our community. The Commission's efforts are ongoing as they continue to identify homes, buildings and structures that meet historical requirements and encourage property owners to improve the appearance of the buildings and their surroundings in order to meet historical registry requirements for being recognized and listed. Good work one and all, I look forward to taking that walk.

The thing I look forward to and I love about my full time job is that it allows me to get to know a small group of young adults really well as I watch many struggle to figure out what life is truly all about. In that course, they figure out who they are as individuals and what they have the possibility of becoming or doing with their life. To Chase Fehring, Joey Morris, Michael Mainord, Dillinger Faucett, Dallen Adkins, Zack Huber, Garrett Rhead, Brenlyn Cutler, Travis Dahlke, Skylyn Sprague, Karen Sanchez, Vivian Chaquico and Alondra Murillo I say thank you for choosing me and allowing me to be a part of your growing up. You have each made the last four years special in a way words can never describe. Thank you for the opportunity and the experience.

Hadlee Anderson, thank you for always being the right example. Thank you for always stepping up, for always doing the right thing even when it's hard and for always going out of your way to help those in need. Over the years you and I have talked about many things, all of which relate to being a good person and a valuable member of the group, or society in general. I assure you I have learned as much from your example as from any other person I have known. It is for these reasons that I nominated you for the Outstanding Citizenship Award that you received this Monday evening at the American Falls High School Awards Reception; I know no one more deserving. Hadlee, thank you for reminding me of what it means to be a good citizen; you have made me a better person, and dare I say teacher and mayor.

Similarly I nominated you, Abby Rowe, to receive the Outstanding Science and Work Ethic Elite Awards. I have known you for almost half your life and from the tender age of nine, I have seen no one manage and make the most of their time as you have. Whether it is school, FFA or gymnastic competition at the international level you excel in all, not necessarily because you are gifted, but because you know the value of hard work and always assume the responsibility to do your very, very best. Though you don't know it, you inspire me every day as I try and emulate your example of what it means to always do your best and to work efficiently and effectively. Abby Rowe, I mean it when I say, you are truly awesome!

Until next week...