

## Our City

As I look back on the week it's hard to figure out where the seven days went between the travel to Indianapolis and back and the National FFA Convention; it was gone in a blink. As I stand here in the Baltimore airport between flights, I will try to catch you up on this Sunday morning. I am pleased with the week that was and the results of our students' efforts. I extend a very special thank you to Patty Porath for all her help and insight at the National FFA Convention. I am also pleased with the efforts made at home by so many others.

I would like to thank the Power County Commissioners for their progressive foresight as they work with all community interests in securing a viable and lasting future for Power County. Water has been the lifeblood of American Falls since farmers carved a future out of the sagebrush and grass over a century ago. It will be nonetheless so, as Agricultural practices expand and our community grows; none of which will be possible without a secure source of water from which to draw. Water or the very possible lack thereof will dictate what our future not only as a City but as an entire county will be. Its availability will determine whether growth and progress are possible; its availability will truly impact each of us whether we live and work in town, on a farm, in processing or manufacturing. Vote "Yes" on November 8th to secure the future of our community; vote "Yes" for the Water Bond.

As usual City crews have been busy with routine fall maintenance and preparation for winter. Sewer flushing continues by our Waste Water Department as do maintenance routines at the Waste Water Treatment Plant. The Street and Waste Water Departments are also working together with property owners in cleaning our alleys of branches and debris to make the flushing efforts possible. The Street Department is in the midst of final preparation for paving at Willow Bay; asphalt should begin to be laid as you read this, while landscaping efforts will spill over into November. I appreciate the efforts of Judy Fehringer and our Police Officers as they work within the Parking Ordinance to clear residential streets of dilapidated vehicles in preparation for winter and plowing. Chris Fehringer continues to work with Jeremy Peirsol, our Public Works Coordinator, and Daren Dalhke, our Street Superintendent, in writing paving grants for our streets as he also prepares for a new boys basketball season at the high school as the boys head coach. Thanks Chris for your extra efforts here at the City and with the School District. Good luck with the upcoming season.

As I look towards this week, paperwork on several projects has piled up on my desk at the City awaiting my signature; namely the paving and landscaping at Willow Bay and grants associated with the projects on Roosevelt and Gifford. Jeremy and Water Superintendent Pete Cortez will be attending an Association of Idaho Cities municipal water meeting in Boise as we try and stay at least in tune with this hot-button issue in our State. I will be attending the Water Bond meeting Tuesday evening as the County Commissioners gather input from citizens and stakeholders as they work to garner support for the bond described above. I meet Thursday afternoon with Meyers and Associates at Willow Bay Café to discuss how to best bring the restrooms into ADA compliance for the coming season. The remodel should improve accessibility for everyone and provide a small office and extra storage for Scott Plousard, the chef/lessee.

On Friday afternoon I would like to invite you, one and all, to an Open House for Jeremy Peirsol. As you may know Jeremy and his family have recently moved to Boise. He has been traveling back and forth for the past month, but that time is near its end as well. I won't elaborate further on Jeremy's contributions to the City and each of your lives over the past ten years other than to say again they were extraordinary. Please make time this Friday between 2:00 and 3:30 pm. to stop by City Hall and give Jeremy your thanks for making American Falls a much better place to live. It is difficult for me not to lament his leaving as doing so changes nothing; suffice it to say I will miss him very much.

As we sit shoulder to shoulder on a five-hour flight from Baltimore to Salt Lake, I find myself trying to looking forward yet again in the absence of Jeremy. Rest assured we remain in the very capable hands of the entire City staff and the hole left in Jeremy's absence will be filled by the efforts of each of us remaining. I guess it's not much different than the hole I face after each graduation as students into whom I have invested years move on with their lives; others eventually rise to fill the void. As we return from national competition unlike last year we aren't bringing home any team gold placings; yet, I am nonetheless proud of my students who competed at the national level. Seven of those students were mere freshmen only a few months ago and I am proud to say the growth they have exhibited in a comparative environment has been remarkable. Not since the freshman class of RielyGeritz, Madison Breeding and Alyssa Buffi have I seen such improvement from a group of ninth graders. Riley, Madison and Alyssa were newly minted sophomores on a top placing national team all those years ago as were the seven FFA members who competed last week with similar results. Geritz went on to win several State events and national honors on her way to becoming State FFA President a year ago. That same potential lies in these seven members and I couldn't be more proud as I look towards their future and that of our Chapter. Riely's remaining goal is to become a National Officer; members within this group share the same ambition, all are capable; but as I look at the odds, 1:110,000, it seems daunting to me. Yet, work and commitment can make short work of long odds.

As some projects at the City become finished other will start in the weeks to come, as new teams will be formed and goals set within the FFA Chapter. Even though I am sleep deprived, seat sore and weary, I look forward to what is ahead. My goals at school and within the FFA Chapter seem to be well aligned with my students, and things here at the City seem to be on track as well, thanks to the continued efforts of so many.

Until next week...