

Our City

Is it good, or bad or does it matter if you think to yourself “I am starting to sound like a broken record.” Perhaps, more appropriate for those under a certain age, “If it seems like I have been binge watching on Netflix.” Regardless of perspective I know I write continuously about what a caring and giving community we choose to live in. This last Saturday and this Wednesday are, once again, tremendous examples of American Falls being the very best place to live.

Dennise and Jeff Burgemeister, Susan and Marc Chipps, Honi and Dustin Allen, Lucy and Julio, Melissa and Mike Henesh, Lisa and Brett Leyshon along with 72 businesses or private donors and over 100 FFA members set yet another record in fundraising for the FFA Alumni Scholarship fund. Last year the Donkey Basketball game and auction raised \$10,210. This year thanks to the continued generosity of our community nearly \$18,000 was netted for college scholarships from the event. Our thanks is extended to all of the 72 donors and all of the bidders and buyers; you have made the next step in education possible for several students who would have never been able to take it.

Speaking of education this Wednesday, or today if you get the Press on March 6th, over 70 careers found right out our front door will be showcased to every student at American Falls High School. For the past five years in an effort to support our local employers the “Grow Our Own Career Day” began at the behest of the Agricultural Advisory Committee. Today it has expanded to include everything cutting edge in agriculture to semiconductors, nuclear engineering, medicine and law. Yet, as broad as the new scope is every career on display at the Career Day is currently and for the foreseeable future in-demand and high paying. The Grow Our Own Career Day follows closely to the Donkey Basketball fundraiser for a reason. It gives to students considering a career and postsecondary educational choice one more chance to make a sound and information based decision on what they want to be when they finish growing up. It is our hope they will all choose one of the careers here at home that is desperately in need of their talent and desire to be successful.

And, it is surprising what you can learn when you have to. Sadly, I am not talking about me, although I benefitted from the efforts of City Clerk Robyn Herndon and our Waste Water Treatment plant foreman Scott Dalling. Through multiple calls and conversations with State licensing boards it was found that several of the City employees currently working in Water and Waste Water are eligible or close to eligible for applying and testing for the Water Distribution II license, which is the standard for managing the type of water system we have in American Falls. I would suspect that by as soon as June we may have one Class II Water operator and by fall we should have two more. As Street Superintendent Daren Dahlke stated, “We need to do a better job of building our bench.” I couldn’t agree more and we are in every department. Sarah Krehbiel, the City Police dispatcher and administrative assistant will now be maintaining the City website and giving technical assistance where needed. Similarly, more cross-training will be taking place across departments as we deepen the bench.

You wouldn’t know it by the weather, but the golf course is due to open as soon as Mother Nature permits. Superintendent Cody Moldenhauer will be rehiring and possibly looking for a few new seasonal employees as he readies the course for you. Construction will begin at the

Willow Bay Café this week to install ADA accessible restrooms and complete some other remodeling as Cris Schultz prepares the premises for another likely good water year.

Spring hasn't sprung but it is around the corner and with it optimism along with the promise of new beginnings. With spring always comes inspiration, at least for me, as I know so much is possible. I am not sure we can collectively surpass what we all made happen in and around this place we choose to call home but I look forward to working with each of you to continue to make American Falls even a better place to live.

Until next week...