

Our City

Not too long ago Scott Dalling, our Water and Waste Water department head, and I had a meeting with a graduate student from ISU who is conducting her Master's research on the water quality of American Falls. Her questions dealt primarily with heavy metals and arsenic. But, she also asked if we treated our water prior to it being made available to you the citizens. Our answer to that question was no, as we went on to explain that the majority of our water comes directly from Sunbeam Springs, except during the irrigation months of summer. Normally I am not the superstitious sort but when she asked that question I got this itch in the back of my mind that I couldn't scratch away. It's weird and wasn't the first time I had been similarly effected by something, I wonder sometimes if others get that same type of itch.

On Monday of last week Scott contacted me as I was on my way to Moscow with 35 FFA members to State competitions; he told me that he had found a leak in the Sunbeam Springs water main. The water main transmits water from the Springs to the water tower east of town. Scott had also contacted Lee Love, our appropriately licensed contracted Water Department consultant, the two of them developed a plan to fix the leak. The plan involved the excavation of the water line, the isolation of the leak, draining and cleaning the area around the exposed leaking water valve and its subsequent removal and replacement. Now, whenever our water delivery system is exposed to atmosphere, or any other potential contaminant, protocol dictates that the system be treated with chlorine. The amount of chlorine used is measured in parts per million, it is extremely diluted but is highly effective in killing any bacteria that may gain access to the system. The treatment of the water brought the Masters student's question back to mind and scratched that itch. Our water is completely safe thanks to the efforts of Lee Love, Scott Dalling and the rest of the department and had I not just explained it you never would have known that it had been temporarily treated. You know by now that I believe in transparency.

In that same spirit, two weeks ago I had a meeting with several of our partners from the Southeast Idaho Council of Governments (SICOG) about a potential Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) and a Local Highway Technical Assistance Council (LTAC) grant for new playground equipment at Lee Street and the completion of the sidewalk down Bannock Street to Lee Street Park. If you have children that play at Lee Street Park you know the equipment there is dated but still usable. The sidewalk connecting Lee Street Park to the City Parks is something that we have been trying to complete for several years. The meeting was productive and the grant writers working with SICOG were optimistic about our chances to secure funding for next year's construction season. I enjoy working with those who are as forward looking as I try to be and will keep you posted as to our progress.

Progress was made a bit over 10 days ago as the class of 2019 graduated from American Falls High School. Like all graduating classes I have developed life-long bonds and relationships with many of the now young adults and while I have said it before it remains true that many within the class of 2019 changed my life at least as much I hope I changed theirs. Similarly, this past week two of those graduates the salutatorian and valedictorian, Shanice Allen and Jadon Allen, became the first two FFA members from American Falls to earn the right to compete at the national level four years in a row. The Allens' teammate Bailey Guymon subsequently earned her second right to compete on the national stage; while as just a

freshman young Hayde Castro earned her first trip to the big show as the fourth member of the Agricultural Communications team. Like many within the class of 2019 and especially Shanice, Jadon and Bailey there is something very special about young Miss Hayde Castro. And, it pleases me to say that she is not alone in her class either. I have that itch that she and others in her class may well surprise even me.

Until next week...