

## Our City

We don't get many days as nice as last Saturday the 23<sup>rd</sup> of November; sometimes we just get lucky. I had yesterday morning considered fishing the river after our FFA Ag Issues morning practice knowing the weather would be perfect. But perfect weather tends to bring folks from far and wide to the river below the dam especially in the late fall and winter months so I went for a walk instead. The walk took me and Buster from Willow Bay to Pipeline along the already established portion of the proposed Ferry Hollow Trail. From Pipeline we drove to the Monument on Eagle Rock road and hiked downriver and back; another section of the proposed trail. On the walk I saw score of cars from Bannock County, a few were from Twin Falls, Minidoka and Bingham counties and the usual from Utah two to three. I found it more interesting when I came across the vehicle from Missouri and two more from Arizona and another two from Montana; that's long way to come for a fish. Above the Hatchery to the dam there were over ten folks on the water or in boats. Between the mouth at the Fish Hatchery and Pipeline there were over 20 fisherpersons. Further down the river similar numbers were found. A perfect day for fishing!

My reason for sharing my walk is twofold. First people are coming from near and far to access this recreational resource; which in 2006 when then Mayor Manning and I worked to open the resource to year-round fishing was our goal. I hope that those from Pocatello are at least stopping by one of our local businesses for fuel, food or a beverage. Too bad we can't capture the hotel business for those traveling from out of state; through conversations with some fly-fishers I have found out that some do stay at Willow Bay. My second reason for sharing is that I was not the only one walking either; it was a perfect day for that as well, many parts of the current and proposed trail are being used already. Imagine the possibilities!

If you can imagine the possibilities and regardless of where you live I would invite you to join us for the proposed Ferry Hollow Trail public Open House at the American Falls Library on December 10<sup>th</sup> from 4:00 to 6:00 pm. The proposed trail is suggested to extend from Seagull Bay along the reservoir to Massacre Rocks State Park along the Snake River. WE are very interested in your support or reasons for opposition to the proposed trail; beyond that we are committed to finding workable solutions to making the trail a reality. Compromise and resolutions cannot be found without everyone's input. It is very much like the effort that then-Mayor Amy Manning and I extended 13 years ago. I hope to see you on the 10<sup>th</sup>.

In a related effort I wish to thank AFHS senior and FFA Chapter Treasurer, Juan Ramirez, for writing a successful National FFA Community Improvement grant for nearly \$2,100. Ramirez and a few of his classmates will use those funds along with an additional \$3,000 that have been secured through other grants by Councilmember Jensen, Superintendent Fehringer and me to build stationary exercise equipment that will be placed along the paved portion of the current Willow Bay Trail next spring. The intent of the exercise equipment is to encourage you to get out more and be physically active. Of course there is an alternative motive as well.

The reason I needed the walk on Saturday was because much of the previous 10 days had been spent addressing the mental health crisis that exists within some of our youth and adults. Make no mistake it exists everywhere; we are not unique. I am not suggesting that exercise will help everyone the way it helps me cope; but it works for many and certainly hurts no one.

I am pleased to inform you that a new Hope and Recovery Center will be opening before Christmas in the new Community Learning Center. **Their services are free!** The Hope and Recovery Resource Center is an Idaho 501(c)3 nonprofit organization serving people who are in recovery from alcohol/drug use and/or mental health disorders. Hope and Recovery's mission is to promote healthy communities in a cooperative effort with those in recovery, family members, allies, local professionals and organizations. They believe the best way to treat those we seek to help is with dignity and respect. I couldn't agree more!

With a bit of luck I will have more good news to report in regards to mental health next week. In the mean time I see many are already finding their Christmas spirit. Great! The Community Christmas Festival is scheduled for December 7<sup>th</sup>; one of my favorite events of the year for sure! My elves and I will be out on the following weekend to take stock of the wealth of Christmas cheer around town. In the meantime Happy Thanksgiving one and all. Be safe.

Until next week...