

Our City

Last week was a bit of a roller coaster for me as I received great news about some things and disheartening news on others. Yet, life is what you generally make of it and I choose to not dwell on the negative, but learn from it what I can and move forward. The month ahead holds plenty of potential and promise on several fronts and I hope the City Council and I can maximize both; especially where they intersect.

As sometimes happens my fulltime job intersects with my part-time job as mayor. Last week was finals week for the second trimester at AFHS. One of the open ended questions on my Biology finals was, "Explain the Biological relevance of what worries you today about your future?" Most wrote about climate change, overpopulation and the spread of infectious disease (COVID-19 or the Corona virus). It may be surprising to some of you how well-informed students can be today as most know the difference between what they see on social media and what indeed the facts are and where they are really found. Conversely, I happened to be in a large store in Pocatello last Friday when I overheard two adults talking about the Corona virus in the checkout line. I didn't know them from Adam; but Oh My Goodness, where do some folks get their information! So I decided to share with you what my Biology students could easily verify. My sources are the World Health Organization and the Center for Disease Control:

Take care of your health and protect others by doing the following:

#1-Wash your hands frequently: Regularly and thoroughly clean your hands with an alcohol-based hand rub or wash them with soap and water. Why? Washing your hands with soap and water or using alcohol-based hand rub kills viruses that may be on your hands.

#2-Maintain social distancing: Maintain at least 3 feet distance between yourself and anyone who is coughing or sneezing. Why? When someone coughs or sneezes they spray small liquid droplets from their nose or mouth which may contain virus. If you are too close, you can breathe in the droplets, including the COVID-19 virus if the person coughing has the disease.

#3-Avoid touching eyes, nose and mouth: Why? Hands touch many surfaces and can pick up viruses. Once contaminated, hands can transfer the virus to your eyes, nose or mouth. From there, the virus can enter your body and make you sick.

#4-Practice respiratory hygiene: Make sure you, and the people around you, follow good respiratory hygiene. This means covering your mouth and nose with your bent elbow or tissue when you cough or sneeze. Then dispose of the used tissue immediately. Why? Droplets spread virus. By following good respiratory hygiene you protect the people around you from viruses such as cold, flu and COVID-19.

#5-If you have a fever, cough and difficulty breathing, seek medical care early: Seek advice and care given by your healthcare provider.

I won't speculate on the spread of this or any other infectious disease; but, the common practices recommended by the experts charged with controlling such things should help minimize risk. Take care of yourselves and be well.

Until next week...