

Message from the Mayor  
#73 07-16-2010

There has been a lot of concern and rightly so, over the decision to move the Milan Arsenal to Iowa. I think we all know what the economic impact to not only Gibson County but Carroll, Weakley, Madison, and Henry Counties would be. In a word, it would be devastating. But now we are hearing that there are plans to store spent uranium in the storage buildings at the Arsenal after it is vacated. It might just be me but does the idea of radioactive nuclear waste being stored on one of the most dangerous fault lines in the world make sense to you. I didn't think so.

Recently, Bob Holmes came to my office to bring me some bumper stickers he had generated on his computer. They read "NUKES – NOT HERE, NOT EVER". I totally agree and I'm sure you do too. We need jobs, not waste products. If you are still not convinced, let me try a little harder to change your mind. It does not slip the minds of prospective industrial interests when they come to visit our building sites that West Tennessee is located very close to the New Madrid Fault. Has that cost us possible opportunity, well I'm not sure but I do know when they find out we are on the New Madrid Fault with radioactive contamination located 10 miles from here, that will make a difference. We cannot let this happen to us.

So, what can you do? For one thing, you can write a letter. Signing a petition is fine, but the powers that be look at a petition as one piece of paper, unlike receiving 1000 letters. The letter does not need to be emotional but needs to contain hard facts about how bringing these hazardous materials to West Tennessee will negatively impact our area. If you go to the Trenton website and look in the middle of the homepage, you can click on the Arsenal information and find some information and tips on how to write the letter and if you scroll down, you will find some facts about the economic challenges that dumping those materials here would cause. It will also give you the names of people to send your letter to.

Speaking of the website, I hope you visit there from time to time. If you own a business, you could have it listed there for no charge. All you have to do is e-mail me and I will get you in touch with our webmaster. He will come take a few pictures, get your info and get you connected. This might be difficult for you to believe, but we get an average of 11,000 hits per month on the site. Where are you advertising that affords you that many looks for free? If you are a consumer, before you leave town to shop, check the website to see if you can buy it here. Save time, fuel and possibly money by doing business locally.

Now, on shopping locally, it is my sincerest hope you are "Shopping Trenton" at every opportunity. When that is not possible, please, please, please shop Gibson County. If you are concerned with the possibility of rising taxes then shopping locally is a viable way to help keep taxes lower. You can't complain about county and city taxes if you do the bulk of your shopping out of county, out of state, or on the internet. You might save a dollar now but eventually you will pay it back in rising property or wheel taxes.

I have something very serious and important I want to ask you. When you were younger and thinking about what you wanted to do with your life, did you have someone who helped steer you in the right direction? Did you have a mentor? For those of you who did not, how might your life be different if you had been afforded that opportunity?

The Gibson County STEP (Southwest Tennessee Educational Pathways) Program is looking for mentors. STEP is a regional effort consisting of 13 counties who have decided to partner local government leaders, educators, and private industry leaders together to better educate our youth to be ready to supply the workforce that economic prospects will be looking for in the future.

How does it work? The purpose of the program is to provide mentors to graduating students to assist them in filling out college or technical school admission forms, help them in deciding what path they would like to choose, and motivate and cheer them on to fulfill their dreams. If you have not been involved in college or technical school entrance paperwork lately, it is difficult and some students and parents give up because it is beyond what they feel comfortable with. Some students don't go to technical school or college because they have no one at home encouraging them or pushing them. Do you know what it would be worth to someone to have a person in their corner to assist and encourage them to get an education that would provide them a productive and useful life? I think it would be priceless.

I have volunteered to be a mentor as have others in Trenton and Gibson County. We need several more. Will you volunteer? We have to start very soon because school is beginning in August. The STEP Program will provide training so you will know what to do. Contact me as training will start soon.

**We are getting ready for the better times to come; a time when there is a Megasite, a Port in Lake County, an I-69, and the spin-offs that will bring economic opportunity to West Tennessee, Gibson County and Trenton. We need to educate our workforce, clean up our cities, and encourage people to bring businesses here. We have to believe that our future will be better. We know that Trenton isn't perfect but we're working on it. Till next time, God Bless Trenton.**