

## Message from the Mayor #27 – Oct. 2, 2008

So, if I said “Let’s go shopping”, what would rush through your mind? Would it be what to shop for? What about how much money do I have to spend? Maybe your thoughts turn to which Big Box store you are going to visit. Will it be Wal-Mart, Target, Gander Mountain, Home Depot, Lowes, or possibly Bed, Bath and Beyond? Or still possibly could it be, “I’ll just stay here in Trenton and get it”. A group of Trenton merchants, Chamber of Commerce officials and I hope it is the latter. Truth is, a lot of the time, it is not.

The first meeting of the Trenton Merchants Alliance took place on September 25<sup>th</sup> and even though there were not a million people there, it was a great success. Consensus centered around the concept that there is a mindset that when people in Trenton go shopping they immediately think about leaving town for a Big Box store. It has almost become the “American Way” to by-pass the “mom and pop” businesses and shop with the big retailers.

Now, I can state the obvious and say that when you leave town to shop you take tax dollars with you that provide you city services and educational opportunities. And I can also tell you that when you go to other towns to shop you cut down on the possibility of ever getting more retail business in Trenton. If you shop in Milan and Humboldt and Jackson, where are they going to build the stores? If retail business knew they needed stores here, they would build them here. Why build in Trenton if they can get you to go to another town. How do you think the other towns got those stores?

I know that not everything you want to buy can be found in Trenton at this point. Yes, even I have to leave town occasionally to purchase some items. But I will tell you that most of the products and services you need are located here and after you figure time and expense, you can get them about as cheap here at home. By the way, if you haven’t looked lately, most of the Big Box stores are far from the discount stores they used to be.

O.K. already, SHOP TRENTON FIRST. Even if you work elsewhere, bring that money home and spend it here. It benefits your children, your spouse and yourself. And if you are so inclined to believe in community, it benefits your home. Your merchants want to serve you and provide for your needs. Tell them what you need to stay here and shop. They are so committed to you that they want to meet again on October 13<sup>th</sup> at 7p.m. at City Hall to come up with better ways to serve you.

I like to write about organizations in our city that help people and the WRAP Center is no exception. WRAP stands for the Women’s Resource and Rape Assistance Program. These people deal with a dark side of reality that most of us do not like to talk about. I have watched them in action and they are daily advocates for women who are in peril and in need. WRAP, like so many groups, can use the support of the surrounding community to help provide items needed to help women get back on their feet after they have made that crucial choice to move on with their lives.

If you have any furniture, clothing, big or small appliances, curtains, rugs, or even a computer you are not using anymore, contact them at 855-2522 and make arrangements to donate them to the center. They can also help eligible women pay their monthly rent or help with transitional housing. Their major purpose is to help women out of a no win situation they would like to stop and if you are in that situation they and I encourage you to call them.

Speaking of ways to help out, here is a great way to enjoy great BBQ, listen to some great music, and support the Trenton Food Pantry and the Christian Women’s Job Corps. On Saturday, October 11 and Sunday, October 12<sup>th</sup>, there will be a Christian Fellowship BBQ Competition at the City Park. BBQ cooking teams from the West Tennessee area will be cooking ribs, Boston butts, beans and all manner of tasty concoctions for your dining pleasure. The fun starts at 6:00 p.m. Saturday night with a concert at the park. Local musicians will be providing lots of great Christian music and this is the part that is hard to believe, it will only cost you a can of food or a non-perishable food item to get in. All the proceeds from the concert will benefit Trenton Food Pantry. On Sunday there will be a worship service at 9 a.m. and judging starts at 10. At noon the teams will be selling their wares for \$10.00 for all you can eat. What a great Sunday dinner! Proceeds will benefit the Christian Women’s Job Corp. Come out and help these two great organizations and have a great time to boot. See you there.

Here is something I am real excited about and there is not a whole lot of time left to respond. If you have looked at your newspaper the past few weeks, you have noticed a ballot to vote for your favorite police officer and fireperson. This event is being sponsored by the Exchange Club of

Trenton and is just a small part of what they do for our community (if you attended the football game last week, you were handed an American flag distributed by the club). Please cut out a ballot from the paper, vote for your favorite, and send the ballot to the address on the ballot. I get the honor of personally awarding the winners at the October meeting of the Exchange Club. It is wonderful to honor men and women who put their safety in harm's way on a day to day basis. Good luck to all our police and fire personnel.

What else is happening in Trenton in October? October 18<sup>th</sup> is the Peabody Band of Gold Marching Contest at Freed Field. Bands from all over West Tennessee will be displaying their marching and playing abilities. The 19<sup>th</sup> is the Gibson General Healthcare Foundation's 5K Fun Run at Trenton General Hospital and the 21<sup>st</sup> is the next meeting of Team Trenton (formerly Citizens for Action in Trenton). If you are a Trenton resident, you are a member of Team Trenton. Come join us for the meeting.

Doesn't Trenton look great now the leaves are turning? Trenton is looking better every time I ride through town. I wonder if everyone realizes how much we could accomplish if we all had a sense of pride for the great community we live in. We all know Trenton isn't perfect, but we're working on it. Till next time, God Bless Trenton.