

Message from the Mayor #9

Let's talk about something really positive. Have you noticed the small businesses that have cropped up around town lately? I bet you have. First and foremost, we have to support these businesses if we want this wave to continue. By the way, we need to support the businesses that are already here also so they can continue to serve our community.

Let me ask you a question. Have you ever had the itch to start a business of your own? I bet some of you have. Wouldn't it be great to have a shoe store, a movie theater, a youth recreational business, and a few more restaurants in Trenton? So what is holding you back? You might say, I just don't know how to start but now I have the solution to your problem. I found a place in Martin connected with the University of Tennessee that does nothing but help small businesses get started. It is called The Reed Center and they have already helped many small businesses get started in the Weakley and Obion County area. They cover it all from how to go about securing money to get started to how to secure a building or whatever you need to start your own business. Their number is 1-731-587-REED, their e-mail address is reed@utm.edu and their website is www.utm.edu/reed. Come on and take that step and look into doing something you've always wanted to do.

I did something really cool last week. I went to Nashville to meet with the Chief Engineer of TDOT to discuss the Hwy. 104 and 45W road projects that have been kind of at a standstill for about 8 years. It was pretty awesome to walk through the Legislative Plaza and see all the people and committees that were in session deciding issues that we face everyday. Something else that was pretty great was the fact that Senator Finney personally escorted us to and from the meeting. I have news for y'all; he really is concerned with us here in Gibson County and went out of his way to make us feel at home. Well, anyway, I explained to Mr. Degges (the Chief Engineer) that we were very concerned with a four lane route to the proposed new I-69 which will eventually run to the west of us. While he did not give me any solid answers (did you think he would?), we did discuss possible solutions to get these projects started back up again. By the way, did you know it will cost \$20,000,000 to finish the road to Dyersburg and \$30,000,000 to finish all the way to Union City? But don't lose heart, they are still thinking about us. Mr. Degges is a great guy and like all of us, he has so much money to do so many things with. And don't worry, I won't quit asking about it till we see some progress.

There is a group of people in Trenton who have taken on the challenge of overlooking the best interests of our cemetery. The cemetery actually belongs to the city, but these folks have taken on the awesome task of looking after its appearance and special needs. One of the pure joys of my job has been learning about the history of our city. Our cemetery has a vast and interesting history of its own. To preserve this, we need responsible individuals to be members of this committee. They are always looking for people who want to join their cause. If you are interested, e-mail me and I will get you in contact with the right people. It won't take up a lot of your time and it is a great cause.

Recently, I've heard some people talk about a community center. The idea intrigues me, but I need to know what the citizens think a community center needs to provide, how it would be managed, where it would be located, who it would serve and most importantly, some ideas on how to finance and fund the operation. I think it is a wonderful idea and like so many of the wonderful ideas I have been presented with in the last four months, it deserves consideration. I will bring it up in the next Citizens for Action meeting (which is April 15th, by the way), but I sure would like to hear from individuals or groups that have ideas. Who wants to lead the way in such a project?

Do you play the clarinet? How about percussion? We have had a great start to our Gibson County Community Orchestra but we need a few more clarinetists and percussionists. I think you are going to be pleased when you hear us perform in a few months. By the way, no matter what instrument you play, we could use you. Everybody is welcome and bring someone with you. You don't have to be a virtuoso, just someone who loves music.

Well, last but not least, a sad and a happy. After over 40 years in the City of Trenton, Ingram's IGA will be no more after February 11th. It will be hard to imagine a Trenton without an Ingram's because of all they have meant to the community. How many young people have worn an IGA sports shirt over the years? How much money has been raised for worthy causes with donated products from their shelves and money from their cash registers? What friends we have had and what community leaders they have been. My congratulations and a heart felt thank you go out to them for being an integral part of our lives for almost a half a century. We wish you all the very best of luck and in turn, welcome Food-Rite to our city. May they have a long and prosperous affiliation with Trenton for many years to come.

Just a reminder that this is February and the deadline to pay property taxes and get your city stickers is coming up at the end of the month. I have asked Chief Sanders to make a special push this year to be diligent in making sure those who should have a city sticker, have one. City stickers are the automotive accessory this year. Don't be caught without yours.

Until next time, do something positive in the city. Visit some new businesses. Visit some old businesses. Tell somebody Trenton is a great place to live and help them find a house here. Keep separating paper from your regular trash and ask your neighbor to do the same. Find a worthy cause to donate to and volunteer somewhere. It feels good to do good. Take some time and e-mail me at trentonmayor@bellsouth.net and let me know what's on your mind. Have a great week and God Bless Trenton.