

Message from the Mayor #28 10-17-2008

Whew! I marked my first anniversary as mayor recently and it has been a whirlwind year. I can tell you I have learned a tremendous amount about how Trenton has worked in the past (good and not so good) and what direction we should expect it to go in the future. I have met many, many people on the local, state and national level that can and are willing to help us move in a positive direction in the years ahead. I have received help from our local officials and agencies who like me, want to see Trenton, Gibson County and Tennessee prosper for all of us. It has been a wonderful experience so far; exciting, frustrating, challenging, and humbling all at the same time. So, I would like to share some of the things that happened over the last year -bad and good.

First, I want to mention the things that make me come to the office and work hard every day. These are the things that I haven't accomplished as of yet and the negative events that have occurred this year. First and foremost, my biggest failure to this point is the inability to get a new industry to come to Trenton. I can say we are showing our buildings to visitors monthly and we are on many lists for 2nd and 3rd visits, but it hasn't happened yet and I feel that for me to be a success, this has to happen.

Even though the departure of Fed Ex and Quebecor World had nothing to do with anything the City of Trenton did or didn't do, it was a tremendous blow to us. More industry will move back to Trenton. Let's just hope it's sooner than later. It won't be because our Industrial Board, under the extremely qualified direction of Ed Norman with help from Bret Fisher, isn't actively working at it every day.

I wish I had been more successful in securing activity opportunities for our youth this year. I have explored a couple of ideas that met with some heavy opposition and it has caused me to have to go back and re-think what I can do to offer more options for youth. I do thank organizations like our local churches, the Trenton Housing Authority and the Trenton Special School District for providing options for our young people.

So what has happened that is positive over the past year? The first thing I want everyone to know is that all the programs and projects I am going to mention would have not happened if I had not had the help of many, many people. These people are folks who really care about Trenton and its citizens. I owe any successes I have had to these dedicated servants of our city.

We now have a First Responder program up and running in Trenton. Fire Chief Barry Green and Police Chief Will Sanders were very responsive to initiating a program that could very well save your life or mine in the future. We have 7 trained 1st responders in the city at this time and more coming in the future.

We initiated a recycling program that has a long way to go but is off to a good start. We can now recycle cardboard, aluminum, paper and some plastic and I now have some exciting news. We can now recycle a lot more plastic products. The list includes; milk jugs, water bottles, soft drink bottles, salad dressing and peanut butter bottles, juice jugs, PVC pipes, garbage bags, and glad wrap. All we are asking is to rinse your bottles out before you put them in the bins. Also put them in containers together to help with the processing. Do you realize that along with the other recyclables we already process, that is most of your weekly trash? Please help me spread the news and let's get Trenton on the recycling wagon.

We have razed 16 condemned houses in the last year and have 6 to 10 on a list to do before the end of the year. This has cut back on dangerous, snake and rodent infested havens and also spots where drug activity was taking place. All this was possible because of the hard work of our city Building Inspector, Ricky Bailey and our Street and Sanitation crew headed up by Terry "Rabbit" Bailey. Speaking of safety, we have picked up 549 stray, abandoned and abused dogs since last October with the help of James Frazier, our animal control officer.

One of the things we are most proud of is the new city website. If you haven't visited it lately, please do. There is a lot of information there. I couldn't have put it together without the help of Bobby Gene Moore building this very informative and useful website. The address is www.trentontn.net. It's worth the visit.

Our efforts to beautify the city have taken a lot of our time. We have re-landscaped City Hall, made a weekly concerted effort to make sure that people are keeping their properties maintained and now have started a project to revitalize the downtown area by building a "green area" at 1st and College. I am also very excited to tell you of a new downtown revitalization project to replace sidewalks, curbs, street lighting, and landscaping from City Hall to the Courthouse. We are writing a TDOT T-21 grant that we will submit in November. I will write more on this project later. So many people including C.B. and Janice Singleton, To the Last Drop Coffee Shop, Frank and Sandra Gibson, Priscilla Poteet, Rickey Bailey, and others have made all this possible.

The North Gibson County Chamber of Commerce and I partnered to have our first Saturday Night on the Square in August. This was an exciting event that we will bring back next spring and summer. We have also started a Trenton Merchant's Alliance that is just getting up and running. By the way, the next meeting is October 28th at 6:30 at City Hall. Thanks to Marilyn Williamson and Vicki Sorrells for all their help. We received a grant from the National Civil War Heritage Trail to include us on their tour through the Eastern United States. Sandy Moss was instrumental in making that happen for us.

I have been to Nashville with Senator Lowe Finney and our own Pat Riley to meet with TDOT officials in an effort to get Routes 104

and Hwy.45 West completed. We have lots of work to do there still, but I heard Governor Bredesen say recently right here in Trenton that this was a priority of his and we plan to hold him to it.

Last but not least, I hope that my writings by-weekly have let you be a little more informed on the moving and shakings in the city. I have enjoyed sharing my thoughts with you and I hope I can continue to do so in the future. Thank you for reading.

It's been a great year but there still is so much to accomplish. I also want you to know how much I love my job and always want you to know I am here to help you when I can. If you didn't get anything else from this, I hope you realize that I did none of this by myself. I want to thank all of you who have helped and shown interest in your city. It is not unappreciated. If I forgot to mention you here, know that I appreciate all the work everyone does for the greatest place on Earth. Every now and then I realize Trenton isn't perfect, but we're working on it. Till next time, God Bless Trenton.