

## **Message from the Mayor #42 04-30-09**

**The unthinkable happened in Trenton on Sunday April 26<sup>th</sup>. While the City was celebrating the opening of one our finest weeks of the year, somebody was taking someone else's life. While the majority of citizens were going about their regular Sunday lives sharing time with their families, getting ready to go to church or gathered downtown at City Hall kicking off the Teapot Festival, the most unthinkable thing a human being can do to another human being was taking place in our city. While I stood in front of City Hall and looked into a television camera and told the West Tennessee area what a safe and warm community we live in, shots were being fired that ended a man's life.**

**I watch the Jackson or Memphis news every night and hear of homicide. Matter of fact, it is almost expected. I hate to say it but I have become almost immune to it except when it involves someone who you wouldn't expect such as a child or an elderly person. Trenton doesn't witness this type of crime very often (it's been 10 years) and I am totally shocked when it does. Despite that, I believe that Trenton is as safe a place as can be reasonably expected. No one can totally shield us from evil no matter how hard we try. A few, a minority are going to abuse your rights by taking advantage of you in some way. It might be taking something that belongs to you, threatening you in some way, disturbing the way you live, or heaven forbid, hurting you or your family in some way. No**

**one can be totally shielded from the evil things that a few people do.**

**The vast majority of the people I see in Trenton every day are wonderful sharing and caring people, raising families, being a friend, watching out for others, and concerned about their community. There is a small minority of people here who sell drugs, abuse and intimidate their neighbors, and basically live off the misery of others. I don't need to tell any of you that their time is coming. It might be here and now but if not, I am confident where it will be, so if you are in this handful of folks, I pray you will come over to the side of the majority of the people who live here. This city has little or no tolerance for those who will not subscribe to the acceptable behaviors that we go by daily. I have said it every time I have talked with you, Trenton isn't perfect, but we're working on it.**

**As many of you know by now, the City Council has been dealing with the issue of limited package beer sales on Sunday. Most of you will be on either one side or another of this issue and most of you will have a strong opinion for or against the issue. The ordinance change to allow Sunday beer sales has to be voted on twice by City Council. On April 24<sup>th</sup> the ordinance passed on the first reading and the second reading and vote will take place on May 12<sup>th</sup> at 5:30, our regularly scheduled meeting time.**

**Because two of our alderman could not attend our last Council meeting, the decision to pass or fail the ordinance change fell to me. I want you to know that I am not afraid to make a decision and I always attempt to base my decisions on what I feel**

is in the best interest of Trenton. In this case I voted to pass the ordinance change and allow limited Sunday beer sales. Now let me explain to you why I did.

First and foremost, I do not believe this is a moral issue. My opinion is that it is totally an economic issue. To me, it ceased being a moral issue when beer was allowed to be sold in the city limits and Blue Laws allowing stores to be open on Sunday were repealed years ago. We already sell beer 19 hours a day 6 days a week. There are Sunday beer sales in Trenton now at the private clubs that exist here. In an effort to make a compromise, beer will not be sold during regular Sunday church times.

Secondly, we are losing sales tax dollars to neighboring cities and counties and taking business away from our own local retail stores. I truly feel that a large part of my job as Mayor is to do all I can to find ways to legitimately make our city grow without putting more tax burden on the citizens of Trenton. I cannot with good conscience send people out of town purposely to spend money when they can spend it here. Make no mistake: people are already drinking beer in Trenton on Sundays. This law, if passed, will not force anyone to drink on Sunday if they choose not to nor does it mandate that stores that carry beer must sell it on Sundays. That will be the decision of the store owner.

I am against drunk driving and drinking too much just as I am against smoking too much, eating too much, gossiping on our neighbors, and any number of things that the Bible points out to

be sinful. I thank all those people who wrote letters against the ordinance change and I agree we would all be better off if those around us didn't drink in excess. One more thing, your City Councilmen do an excellent job on your behalf and I am proud to serve this City alongside them. They are brave men who are voting for what they feel is best for Trenton. I appreciate all they do.

The Greater Gibson County Chamber has a new director as you have read recently. I, for one, am elated that Tara Bradford is joining us. She brings with her invaluable experience in dealing with retail prospects as well as experience in industrial recruitment. On top of that, she is a delightful person who will really add to our already great chamber. I am looking forward to working with her. My thanks and appreciation also go to Marilyn Williamson and Vickie Sorrells who continue to do outstanding work for our chamber.

It saddens me when I get phone calls about neighbor disputes. I was always taught by my parents to be a good neighbor and to respect those around me. People who visit usually convey to me the feeling of warmth and community they experience when they are here. They wouldn't feel it if it didn't exist. It doesn't take much to be a good neighbor beyond respecting people's property, privacy and person. It's not always taking them a fresh baked pie (although it doesn't hurt) and it might be that being a good neighbor means leaving your neighbor alone. We are all trying to enjoy our lives as much as we can and maybe meet some good people in the process. You know, Rodney

**King did have a great idea: Why can't we all just get along?**

**I hope your Teapot Festival week went well and if it didn't, here's a whole new week to work with. We are busy at City Hall trying to get caught up with the tons of work we have in front of us because there is one thing we know, Trenton isn't perfect but we're working on it. Till next time, God Bless Trenton.**