

Mayor's Newsletter

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Table of Contents:

| | |
|------------------------------|---|
| Election Questions | 1 |
| Special December Collections | 1 |
| Pet Gift Certificates | 2 |
| Holiday Safety Tips | 2 |

Election Questions

I was very interested in the City elections this year. I guess when you spend your days working with elected officials you pay more attention to the elections. Before 2009, I knew local elections were happening, and I voted. I just didn't really pay attention.

There were many different issues that came up. Questions ranged from taxes to the greenway and from doing business in our community to people leaving for greener pastures. The opportunities to hear the answers and get to know all the candidates were great. I want to thank the two groups that sponsored debates – the League of Women Voters and the Bannock County Republican Women. I know the candidates also appreciated the chance to get their positions out.

While I listened to the debates, I thought of how I would answer some of the questions. For this month's article, I decided to share my thoughts with you.

First up is the issue of taxes. We are very lucky, because the City Council recognized the

need to reduce taxes and found a way without reducing services. For the Fiscal Year 2012 budget, we reduced the levy rate by 8%. This is the lowest levy rate the Gate City has seen. Even with the decrease, we were able to start a capital improvement fund. Our hope is to use the fund to avoid going into debt for large purchases, such as fire trucks and repairs to City buildings.

The greenway is a work in progress. This project has been ongoing for over 20 years, so it isn't something we can complete overnight. The Greenway Foundation and I are and will continue to work together to complete the greenway, especially the south trail.

What are we doing to keep people in Pocatello? I was surprised at this question given all the economic development that has been going on for at least the last two years. Hoku is in the process of hiring 200 employees with plans to hire another 200 after they begin full production. Allstate will have 600 employees once they are

fully staffed. Petersen, Inc. built a new plant at the airport business park, because they want to stay here. They know the workforce here is one of the best you can find anywhere. ON Semiconductor spent close to \$30 million to expand, and Idaho State University purchased a new joint research building.

If you add up all the outside money eventually coming to our community with these and other projects, it's close to \$1 billion being invested here. (Yes, that was a "b.") These businesses are also paying living wages to their employees with benefits offered. This is just a small part of what we have been doing over the past two years to keep our children and our neighbors in our beautiful city. It may take a few years for all of this to be fully realized, but it's happening!

I am very excited for our area as I look to the future. We are going to be just fine! As always, I'm proud to be your Mayor.

Special December Collections

The Sanitation Department has scheduled two special collections for the month of December. They will be picking up extra holiday garbage and Christmas trees.

Beginning December 26 through December 30, 2011, the Sanitation drivers will pick up extra garbage as a result of holiday celebrations. Residents are asked to place

extra bags and boxes of garbage out in the same location and at the same time as your regular garbage. The extra garbage will be removed the same day.

However, please **do not** leave your Christmas trees out for garbage collection. Instead, use the special drop-off boxes that will be located throughout the city. The boxes will be out

December 26, 2011 through January 9, 2012. The drop-off boxes will be at: Pocatello City Hall—911 North 7th Avenue; Rainey Park—South Arthur Avenue; entrance to Sister Cities Park—Pocatello Creek Road.

For more information about these collections, call the Sanitation Department at 234-6193.

Pet Gift Certificates



It's a wonderful time of the year for people! However, to a small puppy or kitten arriving in a household during the holidays, the excitement and cheer will be strange and frightening. A young animal could become quite confused and scared being away from its litter mates for the first time and surrounded by strangers, noise and constant activity.

The holidays are simply not a good time to give a live animal as a gift. In the midst of all the excitement, the many needs of a puppy or kitten could be neglected. The same is true for an adult

animal trying to cope with a new environment.

It is best to give a gift basket with the supplies a new pet will need, along with a gift certificate for a pet. This allows the recipient to pick out their own new best friend. This also allows the animal to become a new member of the family when things quiet down. The animal has the best chance of adapting to its new surroundings in an atmosphere of calm, loving attention.

Visit the Pocatello Animal Shelter on the upper level of

Ross Park for a gift certificate for your pet gift basket. Give the gift of life and companionship this holiday season!

Oh, and if you're looking for a holiday gift for that someone who has everything, consider a donation to the new animal shelter in his/her name. You can stop by the shelter or send your donations to: Friends of the Pocatello Animal Shelter, P.O. Box 281, Pocatello, ID 83204. We will send a Christmas card to your someone thanking them for the gift.

Holiday Safety Tips



Holidays should be a magical time for everyone. Yet, each year over 8,700 people are treated for injuries related to holiday lights, decorations or Christmas trees. Here are a few tips from the Pocatello Fire Department to keep your holiday celebrations safe.

When choosing a live tree, make sure it's fresh. Cut an inch or so off the trunk to expose fresh wood, which helps with water absorption and keeps the tree from drying out so fast. Use only noncombustible or flame-resistant materials to trim a tree.

When purchasing an artificial tree, look for the label "fire resistant." Be careful with metal trees. Electrical lights are prohibited on metal artificial trees.

Fasten outdoor lights with plastic ties or hooks, not metal staples or nails. Make sure the lights are certified for outdoor use.

Be careful with candles. Never leave them unattended, and do not place them near the tree or other combustible materials. Also keep candles out of the reach of children and pets. If

you have a fireplace, keep the area around it clear and clean. Do not burn wrapping paper, and be careful with fire salts. And when the holidays are over, the best way to dispose of your Christmas tree is by taking it to the City's special drop-off boxes.

Finally, always make sure your smoke detectors are working! Do not take the batteries out of your smoke detectors to use in games or other electronic devices. Enjoy the holidays, but remember to be safe.

If there is a topic you'd like me to address in future newsletters or if you want to comment or ask a question, write it down, tear off this part and send your comment to me. If you wish to call or e-mail, my number and address are listed on the front page. While I cannot respond to all comments individually, I do pass them on to the appropriate departments. v14.n12

My question/comment is _____

Name _____ Telephone _____

Address _____
