

**Message from the Mayor
#33 12-23-2008**

Just like you it's hard for me to believe that 2008 passed so quickly. Well, maybe if you are younger it might have seemed that it dragged by. At my age, the years fly by and I find myself wondering how I spent my time. Again, just like you, I made good use of some of my time and I wish I had done better with the rest of it. Something that was great about this year was I learned so much about the job I have and met so many people that have been so beneficial in helping me do this work.

As I go over the year in my head, I am trying to focus on where I need to go in 2009. Some things are obvious, such as, jobs. My number one goal for the upcoming year is find ways to employ people in Trenton. Industrial prospects, such as the Mellace Family Products project, would go a long way getting us started, but nothing in this economy is a sure thing. There are other ways to gain more jobs such as new retail or the expansion of existing business or industry but that will be very hard to accomplish till we turn this recession around. I will as always remain optimistic that if you work hard enough, it will pay off.

Trenton needs a motel in 2009 and we started the groundwork for that some months ago. If all the pieces fall together, we could see that happen in 2009. That has the possibility of bringing other businesses with it, so we will be excited about working on it as the New Year begins.

I personally am going to be asking our area legislators to push the Hwy. 104 road project to completion. I am a firm believer that once I-69 is finished, Hwy. 104 will be that lifeline, along with I-40 that will make us a viable industrial site to manufacture products and ship them to different parts of the country. God blessed us with location, we just need the tools to make it work for us.

In the last City Council meeting you might have read where the Council is pushing to get everyone in the city to come into compliance with the ordinances dealing with the care and maintenance of personal property. We are going to be working hard to make sure that all of our individuals and businesses are following the rules. We have given some people 15 months to make it right and they have refused. It will be our intent to use all the options we have to persuade everyone to become responsible stewards of properties in the city.

As most of you know, we have written or are in the process of writing several state and federal grants. We have our fingers crossed on the acceptance of our T-21 Grant for the revitalization of the downtown area. We should hear something by the end of

summer 2009. Another grant we will be writing this year is a Parks and Recreation Grant for improvements and updating at Shady Acres Park. Grants won't be accepted till 2010, but the process to complete it is long and complicated. This grant would hopefully allow us to update restroom and concession stand facilities making them ADA compliant, do much needed improvements to the ball field areas, add soccer facilities, and possibly provide park expansion opportunities. All these are wonderful things if we can receive the grant. With the state in an \$800,000,000 budget deficient, we will be holding our breath.

I know I sound like a broken record (believe it or not, some people don't know what I mean by that phrase) but I want to keep admonishing us in the new year to buy as much at home as you can. The first six months of 2009 will be crucial to the businesses in Trenton and we are hoping that all of them will make it. I understand that not every business caters to your needs, but when you can, help keep our retail section strong. SHOP TRENTON.

One area of the city we will be focusing on in the New Year is West First Street in the depot area. With the addition of the depot to the National Civil War Heritage Trail, we are hoping we can open this area up a little for those who will drive by to see it. I want to thank Bruce Hohorst of the West Tennessee Railroad for his help in cleaning up the depot. West First Street has a lot of history surrounding it. I understand it was one of the busiest and thriving streets in Trenton at one time with a hotel and many places to "wash the dust down" for all those weary railroad travelers. While I doubt we ever see that day come back, we will be trying to get that area ready to receive visitors again. It is my hope that at some point the depot can again open up to some kind of opportunity. It is a great building that needs to be used for something.

Lastly this week, I would like to thank my office staff for the great work they do. A year ago I walked into this office "green" with no idea what was going on. They were very understanding and helped me get my feet on the ground. I watch them every day trying to find ways to save taxpayer dollars, taking care of your money, trying to be helpful when you come in, and being concerned with your problems. My thanks go to Sammy, Chris, Audrey, and Leanne for all they do. They have the best interest of Trenton in mind.

In the New Year, the employees of the City of Trenton and I hope we can serve you and help where we can. I know there are things we can do and others the law keeps us from doing but we will try to help if we can. My New Year's wish for you is that you are happy. One of my favorite songwriters, James Taylor, once said "The secret to life is enjoying the passage of time". Life is not always good and it is not always fair but it's all we have. Enjoy! I will say a prayer for you and please say one for the City Council and me.

As we enter 2009 we all realize, Trenton isn't perfect, but we're working on it. Till next time, God Bless Trenton.