

February 20, 2019

Dear Community Partners,

When I left the City Council meeting on Monday evening I carried the positive feelings of encouragement and gratitude primarily because of the reports given to the Council and me by our department heads and other city personnel. Once again I want to tell you that we have some excellent people working with us and for us. I constantly learn from them. I learned another new thing Monday night. Fire Chief Jason Hurley told us that we have three firemen who have chosen to be trained so as to become certified as Georgia Smoke Divers. The term “smoke diver” was new to me, and now that I know a little about it I want to applaud. The Georgia Smoke Diver Association is a nonprofit organization that conducts advanced firefighter training known as the Georgia Smoke Diver Course. No member of the association receives any compensation for his work, and each member is required to cover all or part of his expenses related to the delivery of the course. The association’s mission is to prevent death and injury by training firefighters to be adaptable and to develop critical decision-making skills in high stress environments. They list their core values as competence, honor, integrity, mental toughness, servant leadership and commitment. The sixty hour program is designed for the experienced firefighter who desires realistic training in self-survival, firefighter rescue, advanced search and rescue, thermal imaging, emergency procedures, teamwork, discipline, team leadership, situational awareness, decision making and functioning within the elements of the Incident Command System. The physically demanding and mentally challenging program condenses and replicates the extreme demands that may be placed on firefighters at any fire incident as well as the performance of duties at natural disasters, catastrophic events and acts of terrorism. Impressive?? I think so. And let me hasten to say that Chief Hurley has already completed the course and is a certified Georgia Smoke Diver. Thanks, Chief, for going first and leading your department in excellence.

Police Chief Keith Pesnell followed with a report on recent Bremen Police activity. Our officers are on constant patrol, day and night. Recently an observant officer identified a felon who happened to pass through our community boundaries apparently thinking he could safely stop at a local convenience store. Bremen Police were able to apprehend and arrest the felon. We applaud our men and women who work diligently to protect our community. The three major highways around which Bremen exists bring in good and bad travelers, and our officers have the task of taking care of both groups. This allows opportunity for a word of caution. Criminal activity in our society has significantly intensified in recent years. We must be alert and be aware of our surroundings. We also must be ready to help one another. Never hesitate to call 911 if you see situations that need to be addressed by law enforcement. They are ready to help you.

The City’s Warren P. Sewell Memorial Library has been closed for a number of weeks due to water damage from a broken water pipe. Library Manager Lisa Walton-Cagle brought the great news that the Grand Re-Opening of the library will be March 2nd from 2:00 – 4:00 p.m. We applaud our library staff for their diligence and dedication during these difficult days of repair and renovation. They have maintained much of our library programming while dealing with cleanup, moving books and equipment and all the other things involved in this massive effort. We have an excellent, very busy city library, and we are grateful for our library and staff. Watch for more details about the re-opening celebration.

Also on Saturday, March 2nd, the GFWC Georgia Bremen Junior Woman’s Club will host their 10th Annual Taste of Chocolate at Sewell Mill from 1:00 – 3:00 p.m. Proceeds from this event benefit the Ferst Readers of Haralson County. The Ferst Readers program addresses one of the most basic issues of childhood literacy. It provides quality books and literacy resources for children and their families to use at home during the earliest stages of development, 0 – 5 years of age. It attempts to address the problem of children entering kindergarten without basic early literacy skills and school readiness. Children in the Ferst Readers literacy program receive an age-appropriate book in the mail at their homes every month until their fifth birthday. Research has shown that the single most significant factor influencing a child’s early educational success is an introduction to books and being read to at home prior to beginning school. The program is available to all children regardless of income level. I know you will want to support this event. Tickets are \$10 per person. The times for the library re-opening and the Taste of Chocolate overlap, so you can attend both! Enjoy downtown Bremen!

Bremen Parks and Recreation Director Matt Cody reported that we have 640 young people registered for spring sports. This is about 50 more than last year. Isn’t it wonderful that our youth have this opportunity for exercise, skills training, and experience in teamwork, following instructions, keeping rules, respect and sportsmanship?

We also received reports regarding water and sewer operations and the like. As I drove home I thought about these elements of our city foundational structure. They are like the support beams in a house. You may not always see them, but they are there, quietly and efficiently doing their jobs. With their supervisors and administrators, they hold us up and hold us together. We are blessed. And I am blessed to be able to serve you. May God bless you, and may He continue to bless our community.

Sharon Sewell