

**Message from the Mayor #35 01-22-2009**

**What would you be thinking right now if you owned a retail business in Trenton? I can imagine you would be a little scared or possibly even panicky. In speaking with some local retailers, I have gotten many different answers including a few who told me that they were not feeling the crunch or that business was off maybe 10% to 15%. With that being said, the majority I have spoken with are seeing much bigger losses in the past few months. Some are back 25% and one person I talked to said his business was off 70% in December. I am speaking about a successful business that has been in existence in Trenton for decades, not someone who is just starting up. In August, September and October our city local option sales tax figures were above \$90,000 for each month. In November, they were back in the mid-\$80,000 range. I am anxious to see what December's figures are and I am really hoping they will break \$100,000 for the first time. Your local merchant's worked hard to get you to shop with them. We will see.**

**Once a month, some of your merchants get together and meet. They are called the Trenton Merchant's Alliance and as of this writing had a membership of about 20 businesses, some large and some small. They are joined under one philosophy; how can they best serve their customers and how do they keep you here shopping locally. Something else they provide is a consortium to share ideas and support each other in this downturned economy. If you are a business owner in Trenton, I wish you would consider joining forces with the Alliance. If you are a consumer, I encourage you, as always, to do as much of your shopping locally and keep your tax dollars at home. The Alliance meets the 3<sup>rd</sup> Tuesday of each month at 6:30 in the Teapot Room at City Hall. All retail business owners are encouraged to attend and become part of the group or if you are a consumer and have some positive and helpful suggestions, I'm sure they would like to hear them.**

**In the last election, the citizens of Humboldt passed liquor by drink and with it came some other things that are part of the "liquor by the drink" package. First, it allowed taverns and bars in Humboldt the option to stay open until 3:00 a.m. and it also allows Sunday beer sales not only in Humboldt but also in all the unincorporated parts of the county. Basically, if someone owned a convenience store one foot out of the Trenton city limits, they could sell beer on Sunday. Obviously, some of the retailers who sell beer in Trenton are concerned with the sales they are missing. They have a good argument when they talk about the lost beer tax revenues we are losing to Humboldt. Not that I think we are talking about huge tax dollars, but it would mean some extra tax revenues. Another argument is we already sell beer 18 hours a day, six days a week now. I wonder how the people of Trenton feel? I sure would like your opinion and I'm sure your City Councilmen would like to know.**

**I need to apologize for the recycling bins in the back of city hall and at Trenton Light and Water. Most days they are overflowing with boxes and cardboard. I realize they are eyesores and I am working on a solution. Hopefully, by next week, we will have a larger container at City Hall so that the enormous amounts of recycling materials we are collecting won't spill over and blow around the neighborhood. Now, I'm am not complaining about what you are bringing in, on the contrary, I wish we were getting double and triple that amount. It looks like recycling has caught on with many of you. We need more of you to get involved. I have a request though. We can't recycle styrofoam or styrofoam "peanuts". Please throw those things in your regular trash. Keep up the good work.**

**Something that I am extremely serious about is getting drugs out of Trenton. I am not naïve enough to think we will ever rid Trenton of drugs and drug dealers, but I am not going to stand back and let them sell that poison**

without making it difficult. I want to commend our West Tennessee Drug Task Force for their work in arresting several alleged drug dealers in the past few months, many from the Trenton area. It takes months of gathering evidence to make the charges stick and to make a case against a suspected dealer. They have done their homework and continue, along with our own Trenton city police, to try to keep illegal drugs off our streets.

You know, you can help us by reporting drug trafficking when you suspect it. We will not give your identity away. It's your neighborhood and it is all our jobs to keep our city safe for ourselves and our families. If you want to, come see me and I'll pass on the information to the police without mentioning your name. Let's rid Trenton of drugs together.

Later on this week, we will be honoring Jim Criswell on his retirement as choir director and senior citizen director at First Baptist Church. I have been associated with Jim for several years because of our love for music. He has been a mentor, Christian example and a friend to me and I am sad in one way and very happy for him in another. Good Luck Jim and here's a wish for many, many wonderful years of retirement. My only hope is his lovely wife Phyllis's "honey-do" is long.

Times are as hard as I can ever remember. Some of you remember harder times, but like in those times, we will make it through. I don't know if we have seen the worst as of yet, but times will eventually get better. It is in times like these that we must band together and help each other out. What can you do to help your city out? It might be as simple keeping your property clean and neat or it might mean trying to find ways to provide jobs for those without them. Maybe helping rid your neighborhood of illegal activities or volunteering for a civic group who needs your help is your way of contributing. Certainly, spending money at home, supporting our school system's academic and athletic programs and promoting local activities and events will be of great benefit to all of us. Who knows, a possible by-product of all this is that you will gain a greater respect and love for this place we call home. Trenton isn't perfect, but we're working on it. Until next time, God Bless Trenton.