



Mayor Tom Dale

STATE OF THE CITY 2009

I am appreciative of the time the Nampa Chamber of Commerce has provided for the State of the City address, and the time you all have given. I will try to keep on schedule. As Henry VIII said to each of his wives, ***“I won’t keep you long.”***

It is an honor and a privilege to work with some of the best people in the world – the city employees of Nampa. I’d like to ask all the city employees to stand and be recognized.... City commissions....

Our City Council members are an incredible, hard working, dedicated group of people. **Stephen Kren, Martin Thorne, Pam White, and Curtis Homer**; thank you for your many hours of work over the past year.

Treasure Valley continues to grow more connected, and it takes cooperative working relationships with other area elected officials to move forward together. I would like to acknowledge and thank those who are here for your part in Nampa’s success. ***Please stand.***

The Nampa Mayor’s Teen Council is well represented here today. Please stand. These youth are making a difference in our community. They participated in Rake Up Nampa, volunteered as youth leaders at the Wellness Fest, designed and built the Mayor’s float for Parade America, and volunteered at the Flight Against Meth air show. Over two years they raised a combined total of \$983.21 ringing bells for the Salvation Army. Last Christmas they adopted a family of six for Christmas, this Christmas they adopted a single mom and her three boys providing presents, stockings and Christmas dinner, with the help of Sam D’Orazio and Centennial Job Corps.

Twenty eight Teen Council members and chaperones volunteered as a group at the Special Olympic World Invitational Games, and were also chosen to participate in the closing ceremonies. They have been chosen again this year to be Athlete Buddies during the 2009 World Games. Let’s give them a hand.....

It seems the key word for the year we just closed is "Change."

- On the national scene, it was the theme, and the word most used in Barak Obama's campaign that gave him the victory November, led to his historic inauguration yesterday as our 44th president.
- Along with that win seems to be a change in perception from the election of 2004, as seen in a recent political cartoon.

We have seen **changes** in the educational community here in Nampa. Our friend Rich Hagood retired as the President of **NNU**, and we welcomed new president, **David Alexander**. We have seen the creation and opening of the **College of Western Idaho**, the first new college in Idaho since..... Classes officially started yesterday! Is **President Dennis Griffin** here? We saw the opening of a new elementary school; **Lake Ridge**, the opening of a new middle school; **Lonestar**, and the **Idaho Arts Charter School** moved into its new permanent facility in North Nampa.

It was John A. Simone who once said, ***"If you're in a bad situation, don't worry it'll change. If you're in a good situation, don't worry, it'll change."***

Many Changes we've seen are beyond our control.

Change seems to be an inadequate word to describe the stock market. Down, Up, and Down; and down and down; and up and down..... On and on it goes. There is nothing any of us can do to put the stock market back on a consistently positive growth track so our retirement investments work as planned.

- The stock market affects consumer confidence on retail purchases. We can't fix that.
- It also affects the ability of many companies to expand. We can't fix that.
- We saw major upheaval in the national and world banking scene; excesses, scandals, and bailouts and more scandals Can't do anything about any of that.
- **Change** describes what happened to the price of gas over the year. From \$3.00 last January up to above \$4.00, then back down to \$1.65 today, and moving up. We all sit back and watch in wonder! Many things affect that price: world-wide demand, political pressures and unrest in oil producing nations; storms

and hurricanes. We have no control over any of it. We just pump and pay; pump and pay.

“In the midst of difficulty lies opportunity.” Albert Einstein

When facing **changes** beyond our control, we can either passively sit by, waiting and **REACTING**, or we can actively anticipate them, and design plans and policies to appropriately **RESPOND** to the **changes**, grasping the opportunities.

Our community is made of people with strong faith who believe God can work in all situations to bring about good things for his people.

Martin Luther King said:

“Faith is taking the first step, even when you don’t see the whole staircase.”

And the youngest man ever to be elected President, Teddy Roosevelt said:

“In any moment of decision, the best thing you can do is the right thing, the next best is the wrong thing, and the worst thing you can do is nothing.” Now is a time for action.

Many people have been wondering how the recession is affecting the city’s ability to provide services, particularly in light of hold-backs and lay-offs in the State government. The City of Nampa has worked hard not just to contain expenses, but to reduce them while maintaining the level of services citizens expect and deserve. Budget meetings this past spring and summer were intense, as department directors went back and forth to produce significant cuts in order to balance the budget. Working with our **Fabulous Finance Department**, many departments managed to decrease their expenditure projections from the previous year, resulting in an overall decrease of **13%** from last year’s budget. We used revenue projections from the Association of Idaho Cities to modify our own projections for funding, and in some cases used even more conservative projections.

So to answer the question why we are not having to make cuts at this time, we cut our budget a whopping **13%** four months ago. This appears to put us in a good position to ride out the coming months with minimal adjustments.

That being said, I want to assure you we continue to be engaged in evaluating the impact of ongoing national changes on the City of Nampa's budget, and are crafting appropriate responses.

While it is important to recognize **changes beyond our control**, it is equally important to recognize that which we **can change ourselves**, and there have been many positive changes accomplished this past year to make our community a better place to live.

Our employees are the best there are, and some have reached milestones in training and education this year.

- Four of our street department employees, **Curt Hensley, Scott Hensley, Doug Standley, and Matt Stanley**, achieved the Roads Scholar certification.
- **Daniel Badger**, who started working for the city as an intern in high school, earned his certification for PE – Professional Engineer. In the same week he became the proud father of twins.
- The City of Nampa was presented the "**Visionary Award of the Year**" at the Laser Fiche conference, thanks to our incredible Clerk's Department. Nampa is the first city in Idaho to have all departments on board with Laser Fiche. **Diana, Deborah, and Julie** – Thanks for a great job!
- We saw changes in leadership at the Finance Department – Vikki Chandler
- And at the Civic Center – Marie Baker.
- And we have a new employee in Central Services named **BEN**. It cost us \$3,000 to set him up, and we pay him \$750 a year. BEN is an automated calling system that makes about 2500 calls to residents each month to notify them of past-due status on their water bill. As a result, more people are paying on line or coming to pay before being shut off. After one cycle, we've seen a **25%** reduction in shut-offs. This is not only more efficient for residents and employees, but no price can be placed on

saving folks the emotional toll of having their water shut off.

The accomplishments of our departments are evident of the commitment to positive change that benefits our citizens. A complete report of their accomplishments is available online at the city website. My time today only allows me to touch on the highlights.

While we all are aware this has been a slow year in the building arena, our **Building Department** reports GROWTH, with over \$107 million of new projects permitted in the city. It is notable that the majority of the construction took place in areas other than residential. While slow, there were 257 new home starts this year.

Our **Planning and Zoning Department** keeps busy looking into the future for us and keeping us on track with orderly growth. A total of **11** subdivision final plats were recorded bringing the total of recorded residential subdivision lots available for new home construction in Nampa to **more than 1,700**.

Along with continually being responsive to the need for code changes, considerable work has been completed on the **NNU District Neighborhood Plan** with expected adoption during 2009. NNU has been working in partnership with the city on this plan for the past three years, and it has been gratifying to see the desire of the people in the area to see positive changes happen in their neighborhoods.

We are also gearing up for a complete **Comprehensive Land Use Map** update in the coming year, so expect to be asked to help.

Our **Police Department** had a banner year. Probably at the top of the list was the arrest of a suspect in the 2003 Bob and Idella Young homicide. Our guys never gave up on this case, but carefully investigated every lead and bit of evidence until they solved the case. WOW! Great Job!

I can report to you today, the city is a safer place this year than last. Here's the statistics.

- **19.2% decrease in the total numbers of Offences in the City over last year**
- **17% decrease in crimes against persons**
- **21% decrease in crimes against property**
- **13% decrease in crimes against society over last year.**

We have seen steady declines since 2003. This doesn't happen by accident. It is the result of conscious decisions made by our City Council to commit the dollars necessary to keep our community safe. And while I'm on this subject, I was asked a couple of weeks ago if the slow economy was going to require us to lay off police officers. Let me answer this again. The number of Police and Fire personnel we need is based on our population, not on the economy. The only scenario that would cause police lay-offs would be a decline in our population, and I don't see that happening. The City Council and I are deeply committed to a safe community for our families.

Some other numbers from the finest police department in the state; our dispatch center handles about 18,000 calls for service each month, totaling more than 200,000 annually. We had over 400 DUI arrests; and – here's a big one – 2008 was the first year since 2000 that we **didn't have a single homicide in the City of Nampa!**

Helping our Police department is a great volunteer group of over 55 people, many of whom are graduates of our award winning **Public Safety Academy**. This is an intensive program that introduces citizens to police and fire department methods and operations in a hand-on, up-close and personal way. Just ask Terry Leighton about his encounter with the business end of a Taser! I encourage you to sign up for this program.

We again received an Award for the **National Night Out Crime Fair** from the National Association of Town Watch. Your neighborhood watch programs are making a difference. Keep it up!

Significant changes in the police department include;

- Implementation of an audio reporting system, which allows patrol officers to remain in their cars to file a report. With nearly 14,000 reports, this means NPD officers were on patrol nearly 7,000 hours more than last year. And – no overtime for those hours.
- We implemented a District plan of policing, where officers are assigned to one of 4 city districts for a year. This allows the officers to become more familiar with the territory and issues each district has, and allows people of the district to get to know the officers better as well.
- We started the **GREAT** program. This Gang Resistance Education And Training curriculum was presented to our 5th Grade kids and takes the place of the old DARE program.

- We also resurrected our Bike Patrol this year, putting our SRO's on mountain bikes during the summer. They patrolled neighborhoods, shopping centers and green belts. The same team managed special events such as parades, the Snake River Stampede Rodeo and other events. The use of this team dramatically cut overtime costs to the City and they did a great job.

All of these and other ongoing efforts contribute to our consistently declining crime rate.

The **FIRE DEPARTMENT** continues to fight fires and save lives.

For the first time in many years, we experienced a drop in the number of calls for service for the year. A leveling off of population increases could account for a leveling off of calls, but a drop must be attributed to another cause. We believe the efforts of our Fire Prevention staff and particularly the Public Education efforts are paying off.

Statistically you cannot prove that an incident was prevented, but the trends can be identified, and throughout the year the trend has been downward.

Station #5 on Happy Valley saw its first complete year of service and we are very pleased with the impact it has had on response times to that area. It's proximity to the Interstate has proven to be valuable, especially in light of the major work being done to I-84 and all of the complications that involves. It was in a great spot for the response to the multi-casualty incident at the construction site on Robinson Road on October 27th.

Station #5 was the site of our first cooperative effort with Southwest District Health in practicing the Point of Distribution concept. In the event of a pandemic health emergency that requires a large number of citizens to be vaccinated, one plan is to have them drive to a local fire station and proceed through the vaccination process while still in their cars. Utilizing this concept with Flu shots gave the district and the department an opportunity to try it out and to identify ways to make it happen in the event of a real incident. The exercise was positive and will likely be expanded next year.

Changes at the Fire Department this year include the upgrade of their radio system. This upgrade, funded by 911 fees and the Fire Protection

District, installed a series of receivers throughout the community that take the signal from the firefighter's mobile radio and boost it to an antenna at Ridgecrest Golf Course. Ridgecrest then sends the signal out to dispatch and all other units. This goes a long way to eliminating communication dead spots and enhances firefighter safety.

I could spend the next hour talking about the **Public Works Department** and their busy year, but you'd get bored. So I encourage you to go to the City of Nampa website and read their long list.

Einstein's statement "***In the midst of difficulties lies opportunity***" is especially true for Public Works. The slow-down we have seen in building activities has allowed us the opportunity to carefully look at our plans for the future in meeting the city's needs. We have completed or begun master plan updates for the:

- Transportation Master Plan
- Streets' Pavement Management Program,
- Sewer Collection System
- Pressure Irrigation System
- Water System
- Water Rights
- GIS Master Plan

Folks – we are looking as far into the future as our crystal ball allows us to make good decisions for the city.

The slow down has also allowed us to save money on construction projects. Many of the bids we're opening these days are half of the engineer's estimates of a year ago.

This year saw the completion of Midland and Cherry Lane intersection, the last of the **GO Bond projects**. I'm happy to report all projects were completed on budget. **ON BUDGET!**

The **Street Department** has been kept very busy, with major projects city-wide. (list on screen.) We continue to plan for more roundabouts in the city, with projects scheduled to begin this year at Lake Lowell and Midland, and Orchard and Middleton – a project shared 50/50 with the Nampa Highway Department. Two more are in the planning stages, one at Franklin and Star Road – the first federally funded roundabout in the State, and one at Greenhurst and Happy Valley, another joint project with the Highway District.

We are making progress on plans to rebuild **Amity Road**, from Chestnut to the new Kings Corner overpass, utilizing the \$8.6 million Federal earmark we were granted in 2005. In the process, we have reduced the City's project share from nearly \$2 million to approximately \$1/2 million, a savings of \$1.5 million. It's going to happen!

When talking about streets, we need to acknowledge ITD's contributions to Nampa's system. This year they completed rebuilding the deck on the Northside Blvd. overpass, and are making incredible progress on I-84, the Franklin Blvd overpass, and the Robinson Road overpass. These are great changes to our infrastructure, and we are very grateful to the Legislature and ITD for making them happen.

In the **Traffic division** one of the most publicized projects was the upgrading of 11th Avenue North Street Lighting and installing the new pedestrian activated Lighted Crosswalk. This change has provided a level of safety for pedestrians here that has not been available before.

They have also completed the changeover of all our traffic signal lights to LED's. More on this later.

One of the most visible changes for the **Water Department** is the ongoing construction of our new 3 million gallon Water Reservoir out by the Nampa Highway District office. This included construction of more than 8,000 lineal feet of 24" water mainline completed earlier in the year. This project will significantly improve the water system operation and capacity for the entire south side of Nampa.

The Water Department has also completed the drilling of two new wells, each producing 3,000 gpm. More on this later.

And request for bids was just released for upgrading the water supply lines to downtown. We plan to have this project completed this spring.

At the **Waste Water plant** we completed the most significant process **change** since 1980; the installation of a nitrification fine bubbler system. Total cost was approximately \$3.5 million, completed approximately \$3 million **under** engineer's estimate. This system has increased our ability to treat ammonia by 40% and results in significant energy savings – more on this later.

The **Nampa Municipal Airport** continues to improve and grow. We saw three new businesses open on the Airport:

- Nampa Aircraft Interiors
- Owyhee Air, LLC (Part 135 operator), and
- Starvin' Marvin's Blue Sky Café is getting rave reviews from the customers.

We partnered with the Idaho Meth Project and Greg Poe to produce another successful Airshow; **THUNDER OVER NAMPA**. This show attracted more than 20,000 people to the airfield, and raised over \$28,000 for the Idaho Meth Project.

We are just starting a new **MASTER PLAN PROCESS** with Federal and State Grant funding. There's an open meeting tomorrow night.

We saw a 6% increase in aircraft based on our airport to 341. We have also verified the registration numbers of all these aircraft, and can accurately, officially and proudly say there are **more aircraft calling Nampa home than any other airport in Idaho!**

We've also seen increased corporate use (Target, Macy's, etc); an economic driver for new businesses! The Nampa Municipal Airport is not just a recreational airport anymore. We also completed the parallel taxiway upgrade. More on this later.

The **Department of Information Systems** continues to find new ways to streamline our support structure to provide higher levels of service and customer satisfaction, and generate significant recurring cost savings, which I will talk about later.

- For the third year in a row, the Information Systems Department negotiated telecommunications contracts for a savings to the City of Nampa.
- Implemented an "Online Utility Bill Payment" system for Central Services.
- Implemented an improved "Online Building Permitting" system, including instant online permit fee payments.
- Implemented the Police Report Dictation System.

The Family Justice Center continues to be a shining star of hope for our community. In 2008 the Nampa FJC served more than 1600 victims of domestic violence, sexual assault and child abuse. This was an 18% INCREASE over the previous year. Of these clients, 46% were seeking services for the first time. With this increase in victim services, it is apparent that the Nampa Family Justice Center **is** a great success story. The endless work and dedication, and the cooperation and

collaboration between many local, state and non-profit agencies is making a difference in the lives of abused women and children in our community.

This year we completed the first formal program evaluation of the FJC in collaboration with Boise State University's Department of Criminal Justice. The evaluation validates:

"The NFJC has resulted in improvements to the quality of services for victims of domestic violence, child abuse and sexual assault."

Thank you, Rebecca and everyone at the FJC.

The Nampa Civic Center continues to be the premier gathering place for the valley for community events and arts programs. We booked over **1,350 events** last year and served over 100,000 people with arts, cultural, and community events. Think about it - 365 days - 1350 events! The most dramatic change in the Civic Center is the completion of the expansion project, largely funded by contributions from many community partners.

And did I mention the Lighting project? We're changing to more energy efficient lights. – more on this later.

The Idaho Center continues to mature into the strong economic engine for Nampa it was envisioned to be, under SMG's capable management. The latest issue of **Venue** magazine listed the Idaho Center Arena as the number 1 venue and the Idaho Center Amphitheater number 3 for venues our size in the Northwest. 2008 brought 259 events to the Idaho Center's Arena, Amphitheater and Idaho Horse Park. The number of events is up from previous years, with attendance topping 356,000. Estimates of over 125,000 of these people came from outside the treasure valley. What does this mean in economic development terms? These visitors bring in more than **6 million dollars** to our local businesses each year.

We've seen some great **changes** at the **Idaho Center** this year. The new lobby of the Sports Complex provides a cleaner space for food service, and also allows office space for Event organizers. The New Pole Barns have increased the number of stalls we have while providing a safer environment in high winds and a much better look to the park. We also saw the completion of an expanded and improved Rodeo Club in the Arena.

All these projects were completed with funds contributed by the Equine Foundation, the Nampa Industrial Corporation, the Snake River Stampede and many private investors. Without our private partners, this would not have happened. In fact, over the past 10 years, **nearly \$5 million** has been invested in the Idaho Center by private contributors. **Thank You!**

One of the responsibilities we take seriously is that of **Economic Development**. Especially in a down economy, it is vital to maintain strong efforts to bring business, industry, and jobs to our community. Cliff Long has been leading the charge for us very capably. He has responded to nearly 20 companies considering new location; hosted several major company site visits; hosted tours in Nampa for site location consultants; met with corporate real estate consultants around the country, and met one on one with 14 development companies interested in our **downtown redevelopment** project.

Speaking of **Downtown Nampa**, have you noticed the changes? While we continue to work on the vision crafted with the help of our citizens, which includes the new Library and the new Public Safety building, we are seeing improvements occurring apart from these projects. The Façade renovation program has reaped great rewards over the past several years. In 2008, we worked with 5 building owners – Murdoch Finance, Ed Schiller's Bank of Nampa building, Hong Kong Restaurant, Trust Realty, and LeBaron's Honker Café. What a tremendous improvement! Congratulations to all of you.

Other changes affecting Downtown include:

- Crosswalk construction completed on 5 intersections,
- New Street lighting installed on 16th Ave. N.
- The Nampa Arts Commission was formed to promote public art and identify funding opportunities.
- Nampa Development Corporation has purchased a half block from Lloyd's Lumber between 13th & 14th, on front street and will be converting that for downtown parking this year. We will also be converting the abandoned Tiger Mart on 10th & 2nd into library parking this year. **(Downtown parking!)**

The **Parks Department** maintains more than **290** acres of Park Land, with more than **120** acres of ground secured for future park development. This past year, we designed, with the help of volunteers and the Mayor's Teen Council, and built a new 6 acre off-leash **Dog Park**, and expect to open it this summer. The park will feature an

abundance of trees, shelters, walking paths, benches and separate areas for large and small dogs.

This year the City of Nampa was designated an official "**Playful City, USA**", the first and only city in the state to be so recognized. This award is based on a set of requirements for providing opportunities for unstructured play for kids in the city, proximity to parks, and many others. This designation not only highlights our commitment to youth, but gives the city priority for resources and funding opportunities.

The **Nampa Rec Center** just seems to get better and better every year. This year they remodeled the Sauna, added new cardio exercise equipment, a rubber safety-rated play surface to the outside play yard which allows children to play outside in a safer environment, and we offer several new group fitness programs such as Chisel, Hard CORE Fusion, Basic Boot Camp, and Zumba. I guarantee these will keep you fit!

This year, over \$15,000 was raised for the Rec Center Scholarship Program. 180 scholarships were awarded that allowed individuals and families demonstrating special needs to use the Center. This is an increase of 88 scholarships compared to the previous year.

Overall, the Recreation Center has nearly 14,000 members, and registered more than 500,000 visits. Perhaps most exciting to me is the way the Rec Center is being used to reach our youth. We recorded more than 46,000 registrations in our youth programs this year. Amazing!

Nampa is proud of its **golf courses**. Like the Rec Center, they are self-funded, and don't require property tax dollars to support. Last year we installed a new irrigation pump at Centennial, and this year we will be doing a major upgrade of the entire system. Ridgecrest was awarded a Four Star rating by Golf Digest for the 11th straight year. Between Ridgecrest and Centennial, more than 80,000 rounds of golf were recorded in 2008.

I've been telling you about cost efficiencies and savings over the course of this address. Here's a wrap-up of those savings.

Converting the lights in the Civic Center will result in an annual savings of **\$3700**. Idaho Power helped us in this conversion with a grant of **\$7900**. It'll take SIX WEEKS for us to realize a positive return on investment.

About the conversion of city traffic signals to LED's; every light we replaced used 70 watts of power. The LED's that took their place use 7 watts. That's right – 7 watts. This translates into an 85% savings each and every year.

We are looking at converting street lights to LED's. If we do this, and see 65 – 70% savings, it could save the city over \$250,000 annually.

Lynda Clark has been busy finding grant money for projects in the city.

During calendar year 2008, the City of Nampa was awarded over \$520,000 in grant revenue, with over \$162,000 still pending in applications that have been submitted. This does not include the grants awarded to the Nampa Airport.

The parallel taxiway project at the airport was a five year project completed thanks to more than \$4.5 million in Federal and State grants.

The fine-bubbler nitrification basin at Waste water was installed with the help of a \$225,000 grant from Idaho Power. This one change will save the city over \$20,000 each year in power costs.

We have changed the way we design and build city wells. The two wells we built this year are producing 3,000 gallons a minute, whereas the old system wells gave us 1,000 gpm. This means for the cost of two wells, we are getting the output of six under the old system. Savings? At \$700,000 per well, that's over \$2 million saved!

Also, by doing our water and sewer modeling in-house, we are expecting to reduce outside consultant costs by over \$200,000 annually.

In our streets Department, we have partnered with the Nampa Highway District to plan for two new round-a-bouts in the city, sharing the cost 50/50.

Cost reductions achieved in the IS Department:

- Savings generated in the 2007: \$50,000

- Savings generated in 2008: \$24,000
- Savings negotiated for 2009: \$22,000
- Grand total of **\$96,000** in savings to city taxpayers each year.

By utilizing existing systems in hardware and software purchases, the implementation of our Police Report Dictation System saved the Police Department more than \$100,000. The ongoing savings realized by having patrol officers on patrol rather than in the station is - priceless.

The Grand total of savings:

- Capitol investment savings: Over \$2.1 million
- Grant money in 2008: Nearly \$2 million
- Ongoing annual savings: Over \$320,000, with another \$250,000 possible if we convert our street lights.

The **Nampa Public Library** – continues to serve the public in a facility inadequate to meet the need, and yet the staff seems to work miracles every day. They served nearly 236,000 visitors this year, an average of 1,079 each and every day they were open. This year more than 662,000 items were circulated through our library. How do they do that? I'm not sure, but I know they couldn't do it without the help of a great group of volunteers, including 72 teens who volunteered 1,200 hours to help over 2,800 participants in the summer reading program.

URBAN RENEWAL

We need a new library, and we have a plan to get there. The plan began with the creation of a new Urban Renewal District, which is simply a funding mechanism that reallocates tax dollars received from new growth to accomplish specified purposes within a defined area of the city. Allow me to just review the results of the first Urban Renewal District.

The district began with a total value slightly over \$72 million in 1995. At the end of its life in Sept. 2005, the district had a value exceeding \$612 million. Since 2005, another half **billion** dollars of value has been added, bringing the total valuation for the first district to nearly

\$1.2 BILLION. That added value is what has helped lower Nampa's property tax levy every year for the past three years. Was this a successful program? **You tell me.**

The major goal of the present district is downtown revitalization. You've seen this plan - you helped craft it. It starts with the construction of the new Public Safety Building, and results in the vision you see before you of an incredible, family friendly revitalized downtown.

We are making progress. The Nampa Development Corporation this year has completed:

- Land Acquisition for the Public Safety Building and for the new Library.
- Architectural documents for the public safety building,
- Concept drawings for the new Library.
- Along the way they have also managed to secure land for two new parking lots to serve downtown.

We are hopeful the way will soon be cleared for us to begin construction on the Public Safety Building, the first step in realizing the vision for downtown. One of the opportunities our present economy has provided is an extremely favorable construction climate. The Library and the Public Safety Building are infrastructure improvements our city needs, and this slow economy is the time to build them. Building now will save the taxpayers millions of dollars, create jobs locally, and set us up for success when the economy turns upward again, **AS IT WILL.**

CLOSING

One of the characteristics of Nampa that hasn't changed is the commitment of our citizens and our businesses to go above and beyond in helping our community. This year we saw more than 750 volunteers turn out to help people in need in the Brush Up Nampa and Rake Up Nampa programs.

There is a broad coalition of leaders from Nampa, Caldwell, and Vallivue school districts, business leaders, and city officials that has planned and organized a summit to be held January 30 right here called: Keeping the Promise; Idaho's Summit on Dropout Prevention.

Last year we saw the impact of the Rachel's Challenge program on many of our school kids. This year the program is returning, with the goal to reach many more with this message of hope and caring. Our banking community has stepped up to sponsor schools: Home Federal, (Len Williams) Zion's Bank, DL Evans, and Washington Trust have all committed support. I also want to thank VanAuker Companies for their commitment to help.

As we work to improve our city's energy efficiency, I am very grateful for the partnership of Idaho Power. In this last year alone, they have contributed more than \$ 230,000 to help us reduce our power consumption. Mike Ybarguen –Please pass on our heartfelt thanks.

Lastly, we are all aware of the many people in our community who have lost their jobs in the past year. We all have family or friends whose lives have been touched by this, and are searching and wondering. I wish there was some way to change all that right now, but it's not going to change overnight. In this time of uncertainty, some may be wondering how they are going to fill their time as they are job hunting. If opportunity arises out of difficulty, then in the face of losing a job, there is opportunity. **I'd like to ask Helena Nelson to come up and share her story.**

Thanks, Helena

There are many organizations in our community that can plug people into positions of service as a volunteer. The Mentoring Network, the Boys & Girls Club, RSVP, the Nampa Library, the Salvation Army, the Nampa Shelter Foundation, the Nampa Family Justice Center, and probably all the churches in town have needs that can only be filled by volunteers. Consider this one of those opportunities Einstein said you would find in the middle of your difficulties. If you need help getting connected with an organization to share of your time helping others, call my office, and we'll point you in the right direction.

During the down economy we can move forward – together.

The famous philosopher Jimmy Dean once said:
"I can't change the direction of the wind, but I can adjust my sails to always reach my destination."

We know where we're going. As we work together, we will reach our destination.

"It Couldn't Be Done." Edgar Guest

**Somebody said that it couldn't be done,
But, he with a chuckle replied
That "maybe it couldn't" but he would be one
Who wouldn't say so till he'd tried.**

**So he buckled right in with the trace of a grin
On his face. If he worried he hid it.
He started to sing as he tackled the thing
That couldn't be done, as he did it.**

**Somebody scoffed: "Oh, you'll never do that;
At least no one we know has done it";
But he took off his coat and he took off his hat,
And the first thing we knew he'd begun it.**

**With a lift of his chin and a bit of a grin,
Without any doubting or quiddit,
He started to sing as he tackled the thing
That couldn't be done, and he did it.**

**There are thousands to tell you it cannot be done,
There are thousands to prophesy failure;
There are thousands to point out to you, one by one,
The dangers that wait to assail you.**

**But just buckle right in with a bit of a grin,
Just take off your coat and go to it;
Just start to sing as you tackle the thing
That cannot be done, and you'll do it.**