

Saying 'no' is easier

By Dana Harris

Grant City Administrator

Editor's Note: *This is the first column written by City Administrator Dana Harris who will periodically address issues pertaining to residents of Grant.*

When Jan [editor] asked me six months ago to write a column for the paper, I said, "No." It's always easier to say no to a request like that than it is to say yes.

It wasn't just the time involved or the fact that my improper punctuation would be available for all to judge. (I love to speak for an audience—hate to write for one—it's the punctuation!) It was also that I really wasn't sure anyone was interested in what I would have to say about city government. Thankfully, a very engaged Rotary audience changed my thoughts about that, and so, here I am, six months later saying yes to Jan's request.

□ And that also happens to be the topic of this week's column—a thank you to all of the rest of you who have in one way or another said yes.

□ Many of you know that we recently finished an armor coating project in Grant. It was a large project that included various streets in all areas of town.

Because of the way the companies that complete these projects travel, we never have much notice before they arrive. We don't have time to publish their plans in the paper, but this year we did print flyers asking drivers in the affected areas not to park on the streets until after the project was complete.

Things went well—for about the first two hours—then some equipment broke down and the crew sat for well over a day.

Our flyer asked people not to park on the streets for that Monday and Tuesday; the work was done on Wednesday. (Insert frown here.) I was expecting calls and complaints and I was expecting to have to tow a lot of cars. Instead, people were pleasant and understanding. Despite everything, we only had to tow one car! Thank you, all.

□ That got me to thinking about everyone else who has been so nice and helpful since I began as city superintendent. I owe so many of you a huge thank you. I'm not going to name names, lest I embarrass the modest ones, but there are a few groups I want to mention. Of course, I must start with the mayor, council, and every employee of the city—we don't all agree on everything, but I do believe that we all have the best interests of the city in mind with everything we do. Thanks to all of you, I enjoy going to the office!

Here is where I also want to say a big thank you to all of the volunteers on our city boards. Many of you put in more time and effort than most people ever realize.

From the members who sometimes have very tough public decisions to make (like the public

works board, planning commission, economic development groups, parks and rec advisors) to the ones putting in a lot of physical labor and sometimes their own money (those on the airport committee, tree board, library board)—thank you all for saying yes when it would be easier to say no!

□ And thanks also to those indirectly involved with city government—the hardworking and friendly business owners and employees, the residents who stop me on the street with a smile (and the occasional complaint), everyone involved with county government, and everyone else who volunteers, helps a neighbor, and chips in without a complaint.

□ Finally, on a personal note ,here’s where I am going to name names – a big special thank you to Andi Lee and family for their last-minute hospitality. And to Fred Reichert and George, as well as Jeff Wall for showing up with chainsaws, a pickup, and lots of hard work after the storm. It is neighbors like you who make me so happy I chose to come to Grant.

□ Thank you to all of you who contribute to our quality of life by saying yes when it would be easier to say no.