

**CALENDAR OF EVENTS**

**Veterans Day Service**

**November 11th**

**American Legion**

**Community**

**Thanksgiving Dinner**

**November 23rd**

**KC Hall**

**Lighting of the Christmas Tree**

**December 1st**

**Town Center Park**

**One Stop Holiday Shop**

**December 9th**

**10 a.m.—4 p.m.**

**Murphysboro Event Center**

**Annual Christmas Dinner**

**December 25th**

**KC Hall**



**From the Desk of Mayor Stephens**

Those of you that read this newsletter regularly know that I try to use this space to address issues and answer questions that I hear frequently. This issue of the newsletter will be used in a similar nature, with a few "Thank You's" and announcements mixed in. First to the "thank you" part of the newsletter.

**Thank You's**

Thank you to everyone that helps make the months of September and October so busy in Murphysboro. The Riverside Art Wine and Blues Festival attracted nearly 900 attendees. A big thank you to the Murphysboro Chamber of Commerce for putting that event together. The Apple Festival was once again a success bringing 1000's of people to town. The Oak Street Art Fair had dozens of vendors for their event. The BBQ Cookoff went off without a hitch, and the Big Muddy Monster Brewfest at Riverside Park attracted hundreds to Murphysboro as well. These and other events make Murphysboro a place to call home.

I also want to say a huge thank you to the members of the "Murphysboro Hometown Christmas Committee." This group is made up of female business owners and community leaders. For the last 10 months they have been quietly organizing a number of events and decorations that will make Murphysboro shine during the Christmas season. Some of these events will include horse and carriage rides, and a Tree lighting ceremony on December the 1st. Also worth mentioning is that the Hometown Christmas committee has decided to put all of Murphysboro's Christmas events together in one brochure. This will allow everyone to see all of the wonderful events happening this holiday season right here in our town.

**Now to the Frequently Asked Questions.**

1) When is the hotel going to be built?

I have been asked this question often since the Apple Tree Inn was demolished in February of 2016. I am happy to report that by the time this newsletter reaches you, dirt work and other action will be seen underway at the site. The developer, Joe Koppies, has shared that the hotel will be a Holiday Inn and Suites, and will have approximately 75 rooms. This will benefit the City of Murphysboro, and specifically the Murphysboro Tourism Commission. Hotel's generate "bed taxes" with each room rental. That tax goes to the Murphysboro Tourism Commission to help them further promote Murphysboro as a destination to the region. Once the dirt work in the area is completed, the hotel construction is set to get underway in early 2018. Despite some delays, actually getting to see this come to fruition is an exciting development for Murphysboro.

2) Will anything ever be done about the flooding that occurs in town after heavy rains?

I have asked myself this question for the last 4 years. Although it is long past due, the city recently undertook a project to clean out "pond creek" which is the primary drainage feature for the northern half of Murphysboro. Over the last 20 years there was minimal maintenance done to "pond creek". Blackwood drive leading to the high school, and residents on Roberta Drive would experience flooding after periods of heavy rain. Thanks to the efforts of Alderman Dan Bratton and Gary McComb "Pond Creek" was cleaned of tons of debris and sediment. This should help facilitate better drainage. Further improvements to the City's drainage infrastructure are planned, and we as a City Government continue to strive to find ways to eliminate flooding issues.

3) What is going on with the Murphysboro IYC facility?

I have been told by various people in the Governors Office, and by State Representative Terri Bryant that the facility is still slated to be opened. However due to budget constraints the timeline has been somewhat delayed. I am hopeful that facility can be re-opened as announced in October of 2016. Not only is the re-opening good for Murphysboro economically, but is also simply good public policy. Those who are incarcerated deserve a legitimate second chance, and training them to re-enter society in a facility such as the former Murphysboro IYC will help give them that second chance.

4) When can I meet with you?

Anyone wishing to meet with me can do so by calling 618-684-4961 and asking for a meeting with me. I also respond frequently to my email at [mayor@murphysboro.com](mailto:mayor@murphysboro.com), and would love to hear from you.

Have a great Fall and Winter, see you soon.

Mayor Will Stephens