

SUPPORT CRIME PROPOSAL

Last Tuesday, making good on a campaign promise, the two newly elected guns in the city's arsenal against crime presented their proposal to the city council to curb crime in Fairfield. John Mraz and Frank Kardos fired off a substantial salvo of strategic thinking that hit the mark. John Mraz, a prior valedictorian of the Dirty Harry school of kick butt, has impressive 4 H credentials- a battle wizened hard-ass, a passionate heart, a level head and chutzpah. Frank Kardos showed the chops we all knew he had; crisp intellectualizations with a practical flair. Thanks for bringing your game.

Check your pulse and grab your knickers, because if you think you are hearing praise and support for those who work to serve us, you're damn right. Fairfield city leadership is diverse and talented. Marilyn Farley offers reflective reasoning, Jack Batson has a talent for highly informed strategic and tactical logic, and Harry Price gravitates towards a global, future-oriented, big picture style while Bill Gresham and city manager Kevin O'Rourke bring professionalism, expertise and talented staffs.

Nature, politics and success in effecting social change requires diversity. Leaders emerge, but the best teams are always the ones with the greatest engagement of all the players. Just as 'Prince' Michael Johnson, County Manager, needs to be brought down a notch or three, these folks need to be supported.

The council must publicly make good on its charge to price out the crime fighting plan, do the data drilling, classify the positions, examine the feasibility and legality of 911 surcharges and have staff do what they do. Deliberations are just that; deliberate.

Ok, so far so good. Staff has the proposal, the media is doing its job and Gresham and the thin blue line gets kudos for a recently published dropping crime rate. Community policing policies, such as the crime free multi-housing program and the third Citizens' Police Academy are running well.

Now, we must look over the rainbow. We will always have crime. If crime is a jackass out of the barn running amuck, yes, we have to catch it. But for God's sake, think long term. How about breeding less jackasses, building better corrals and keeping the grass greener in home pastures so that jackasses act more like thoroughbreds and work horses racing our community to successes and shouldering their fair load. Support Mraz's leadership and get the Boys and Girls clubs built. Tap the abilities of Frank Kardos regarding highly successful post secondary programs and pump the Chamber of Commerce. Build a diverse, well publicized blue ribbon commission on crime working hand in hand with commerce, educators, social services and the city council and police

Across America, citizens have partnered successfully with police, public officials, state and national authorities, foundations, businesses, and social and religious organizations. There is a direct connection between social and political participation and social and personal health. Investment in the "circle of

virtuosity” through engaged citizenship is self propelling. Good begets good. But the dividend of citizen disinterest is decimation and in time, death of a nation

I believe the city council has no intention to let this be a back burner issue but the burners must remain on in every household in Fairfield. Ensuring the quality of our life is absolutely the responsibility of all of us; parents, students, businesses, educators, residents and assorted jackasses who occupy police time by being idiots in the way we drive, conduct our lives, raise our children, model behavior, complain unnecessarily or give reason for others to necessarily complain about us.

We elected the council to lead but we are doomed if we sit on our ever broadening behinds whining and hoping crime will all go away. If we do, the next smell wafting through our little hamlet will be the exhaust of departing cars and the pungent aroma of jackass’s ranging wild and free.

Kevin Ryan is a retired Colonel, physician, musician and author who lives in Fairfield.