Mayor's Journal January 20-26

Little did I realize how quickly a week comes and goes until I made the promise to post this journal on a weekly basis. It surely makes me appreciate the work of a news journalist. This past week, as usual, was a busy one.

Tuesday, January 20: I gave comments at an EITC (earned income tax credit) press conference at University Mall, which was developed by WJ Monagle in the City's Community Programs Department.

I also spoke at a press announcement for the Arkansas River Trail. Heart Clinic Arkansas, a group of 23 cardiologists represented by Dr. Robert Lambert, has agreed to raise a minimum of $350,000 for construction of the Arkansas River Trail in recognition of the proven health benefits associated with trail use…exciting news!

The City Board meeting this week lasted until almost midnight. There were three tough issues: one dealing with the location of a sexually oriented business on 65th street (our board did not allow an extension of the time to remain open); the second was a large tract rezoning at Hwy 10 and Chenal (our board held this on first reading and asked the developer to work with the neighbors to see if a compromise could result) and the third was the revision of the LR Transportation Code involving taxis and limo service (thanks to Directors Wyrick and Cazort a ordinance was adopted).

We also had a little fun Tuesday during the presentation section, or I could say...a little humor...in that we gave Lil JJ, who won the BET comedy talent search, defeating comedians much older. Lil JJ is a fourteen year old native of Little Rock and I know we will be hearing more about and from him in the years to come.

Wednesday, January 21: Amongst the normal daily routines, Shayla met with the Public Relations Committee. One of the main topics being discussed at this time of year is the City of Little Rock employee picnic.

Thursday, January 22: As previously mentioned, I am now the Chairman of the new Intergovernmental Advisory Committee to the FCC. My first meeting is in February and I spent time with Bureau Chief, Dane Snowden, preparing the agenda for this meeting. If any of those reading this have issues you wish me to consider, please let my office know.

Later in the morning, Shayla attended an American Cancer Society's public forum at the Neighborhood Resource Center. She visited with ACS staff and council members from the Fayetteville Board of Directors regarding their new ordinance relating to no smoking in restaurants.

I had a lunch meeting at UALR. I serve on the Life Interrupted Advisory Committee and we met to discuss plans for the events this fall. I am excited about this in that it brings

to the state attention and the families of those who spent time in the two Japanese Internment Camps during WWII. The camps were at Rohwer and Jerome.

Later that afternoon, Shayla and the Mayor's Youth Council volunteered at Watershed helping to sort clothes and a variety of other things. They spent around 2-3 hours helping Reverend Hezekiah Stewart. Rev. Stewart has been a Godsend to many in need and I am pleased to offer support.

Friday, January 23: This morning Shayla had a follow-up meeting with City staff regarding the 12th Street Corridor. Later, I had my first Crime Abatement Program (CAP) meeting with various department officials to define and begin work on several hot spots of crime in the city. I am very optimistic about this process and will keep you posted.

Friday afternoon, Shayla and I toured the Hilton off of University. The Peabody Group is doing a wonderful renovation and it's scheduled to open in July of this year. What a terrific addition to the mid-town area.

Saturday, January 24: With the Little Rock Marathon being just a few weeks away, they had an event this evening and Shayla attended on my behalf. My thanks to Greg Hatcher for his support.

Monday, January 26: Several other wonderful things happened this week: I had the opportunity to tour the Presidential Library (it is simply awesome); I was honored to attend the visit at Baptist Hospital by President Bush, and I made an appearance at the ceremony marking the merger of Florence Crittenton Home with Freewill Baptist Family Ministries (this assures a stable partner for our 100 year old Florence Crittenton).

Busy week...yes...but a wonderful week just the same. Hope your week is going well.