Mayor's Journal
October 11-November 3

The past few weeks have been busy and eventful. It also appears the next two months will be equally so. I am particularly pleased with the incredible week of activities surrounding the 60th anniversary of Heifer International. We are truly blessed to have this wonderful humanitarian organization in Little Rock and are fortunate Heifer has chosen the Capitol city for the construction of their new World Headquarters.

On Tuesday, October 19, the City and the Convention & Visitors Bureau hosted a reception in honor of the Heifer International Board of Directors. The Little Rock Peabody assisted in sponsoring this event. I also want to thank Congressman Vic Snyder for attending and presenting approximately 250 Arkansas Traveler certificates. Later in the week, the City dedicated World Avenue, the street which leads to the new Heifer headquarters. The week was topped off with a Gala event hosted by Ted Danson and Mary Steenburgen. Visitors from over 50 countries and 1200 guests attended this phenomenal evening.

My thanks to Jo Luck, the dynamic CEO of Heifer. Her vision, enthusiasm, and leadership have taken Heifer to new heights. Little Rock is reaching new levels, and this organization is a great reason for that momentum.

The following week, representatives from Heifer International were in New York City to receive the Conrad Hilton Prize and to celebrate a Heifer-sponsored art exhibit at the United Nations. I was privileged to be asked to attend a reception at the UN for the exhibit of photos by Darcy Kiefel. City Director Barbara Graves and Barry Travis of the Little Rock Convention & Visitors Bureau joined me in leading a delegation to New York City for this.

Darcy's photos are also on exhibit at the Arkansas Art Center's Terry House Community Gallery through December 12. Darcy is a talented photographer who has traveled all over the world documenting the work of Heifer International. I encourage you to stop by the Terry House at 7th and Rock Streets in downtown.

It was exciting to attend the announcement of the expansion of Frontier Airlines into the Little Rock market. I am pleased to see that we are continuing to have additional options for flights in and out of Little Rock. My appreciation goes to the Airport Commission and staff for their efforts to continually enhance Little Rock National Airport.

Two of my most enjoyable appointments these past few weeks were visiting with the boys and girls of Terry Elementary and Christ Lutheran. While it may be trite to say that children are our future, it is nonetheless true. It is always a pleasure for me to visit their classrooms and give them an overview of city government.

I also had the pleasure of meeting with Dr. Jonathan Drummond-Webb at Arkansas Children's Hospital. You may remember that he was featured on the ABC series about

the hospital two years ago. Dr. Drummond-Webb performed heart surgery on a young man from Cabot who has survived longer than any other recipient has to date. What a success story and what a story we have to tell about Children's…we are blessed to have the talented physicians that serve us here in Little Rock. I also got to meet Dr. Michael DeBakey who developed the device that Dr. Drummond-Webb used. It was an honor to spend time with these two men.

I wish to extend my congratulations to the Dunbar Community Center on its 50th anniversary and ALLTEL Arena on its 5th year. My fellow City Directors and I are proud to have both in Central Arkansas. We wish them many more years to come.

I met again with the management of East View Terrace and City staff. They are continuing to make improvements to the facility. That complex can play a positive role in the Hangar Hill neighborhood. I look forward to working with them, as well as the concerned citizens as we ensure that East View offers a positive presence in the community.

The City of Little Rock and State of Arkansas have been working with the Consul General of Mexico to establish a local office in Little Rock. Representatives from the Mexican government were in town recently to visit possible sites. I expect a formal announcement in the near future. When the Mexican Consulate opens here, it will be a wonderful resource for our citizens.

I hope you attended BOO at the Zoo. As it is every year, this special event offered fun for everyone. It was a wonderful experience to walk through the Zoo to see families enjoying the sights, sounds, and rides. It is an outstanding way for families to spend time together.

Like many of you, I took advantage of early voting. I know the lines were long at most of the polling locations. I am pleased by this renewed interest in voting and hope this trend continues in the future. As someone who has run in several political races, I want to express my admiration for the men and women who offered themselves as candidates this year. Win or lose, it takes a great effort to mount a campaign. I also want to express my appreciation to those who voted. We often take the right to vote for granted, but we should not. It is that right that separates us from so much of the world.

In December of 1947, the last clang of a trolley bell was heard in downtown Little Rock. It is exciting for that sound to once again be heard. I am happy to have been a part of the return of trolleys to both Little Rock and North Little Rock. The River Rail will be a wonderful addition to our community. I am confident that it will expand and reach out to many other parts of Central Arkansas.

As we exit the campaign season and approach the opening of the Clinton Presidential Library, the excitement around the city is continuing to build.

God bless you. And God bless the City of Little Rock.