

LEBANON EXPRESS

Column: Mayor looks forward to Strawberry Festival

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It's almost June and you know what that means! The Strawberry Festival and Parade are coming soon and the Strawberry Princess Coronation is tonight at 7 p.m.

I hope you can join me as I proclaim the festival week open and crown the Strawberry Queen. If you have not attended a coronation, it is a fun and entertaining event for the whole family.

The parade will be on Saturday, June 7, and the Mayor-mobile will be all decked out for the Strawberry Night Fever theme this year. After all, I was in high school when flared pants, platform shoes, open shirts and gold chains were all the rage.

The past year and a half as your mayor, we have had some tough decisions to make. Decisions that affect employees' and citizens' lives directly. Each and every council member and myself take each decision to heart and try to do what is best for the whole community.

One thing I love about our town is our resiliency. When times have been tough, Lebanon citizens have persevered and kept going. Even when the timber industry went away, Lebanon started job training and got LBCC here. When the economy tanked, Lebanon has risen and done better than most other Oregon cities.

One of the things I see daily around town is spirit. Lebanon has a spirit of community. People rally around others, not just themselves. There are so many volunteers and those that give their time selflessly to help others and our community.

The Lebanon Strawberry Festival and Parade are a couple of the best examples of that spirit. We forget our politics, our problems, the bad stuff, and we go sit out on the curbs of downtown Lebanon, elbow to elbow with neighbors, and just have a fun day.

Later, everyone heads down to the Fairgrounds to score a free piece of the "World's Largest Strawberry Shortcake." Yum! What a way to start summer.

Our town of Lebanon has a great history and story. The Strawberry Festival Week helps us to remember that history and keep a fun tradition for generations.

Remember, we still live in the "city that friendliness built" and we will continue to live that truth!

I will see you on the parade route,

Mayor Paul