

November 2015 – Mayor’s Message

After I write one of these columns, I immediately start thinking about the next one. After I finished last month’s edition, I thought – OK, next month is November, so I’ll put a Thanksgiving theme on all the wonderful things that have happened and that are happening right now in our great city.

I typically write these pieces on the Saturday morning before the Wednesday they are due. That way they are fresh and timely. I then let them sit and ruminate in my mind through the next couple of days so I can edit them if need be.

However, as I sit here this Saturday morning, things feel very different. I find it very difficult to write about economic development, parks, street improvements and other positive things going on.

You see, the Paris terrorist attacks happened last night.

I was up very late last night watching the aftermath of the attacks. That horrible 9-11 feeling in the pit of my stomach is back. Without getting too deep in geopolitical matters and my worldview, I will simply state that this event will change the world as much or more than 9-11.

Since this is a column about our beloved City of Seguin, I’ve managed to find a Thanksgiving theme in all this based on my experiences over the last month. The theme can be expressed in 2 parts.

Part 1 is to be thankful for the emergency system that we have in place here in Seguin and Guadalupe County.

The tornado and flood event that occurred last month triggered our emergency management system into effect. While we did not experience a terrorist attack, there was real and unexpected danger, chaos, destruction and human tragedy occurring, and it had to be dealt with.

The initial destruction was caused by the tornado. The first responders from the county and the city raced to the scene as soon as possible. The situation was assessed, the command system was initiated, and aid and rescues began. All the while, the rains continued and all our rivers and streams in the county were beginning to flood. Since the flooding danger increased and expanded, a command center was set up at the county emergency offices on Donegan Street.

This is where I became an eyewitness to the operations. First responders from both the county and the city gathered in the center, and immediately began managing the various incidents that were occurring; all the while monitoring river flow rates and rises, and keeping the public and media informed. While it appeared somewhat chaotic at first, people knew what they were supposed to do, and they got it done.

No, it was not a terrorist attack, but the very same system would spring into action should a terrorist attack happen. What I'm trying to say is that there is a system in place, and I have seen it at work, and we should be thankful to all the dedicated first responders and emergency personnel who make it work.

Part 2 is to be thankful for our armed forces. For the past year, I have been up-close and personal with the US Air Force. Since the Randolph Auxiliary Field has reopened, the command at Randolph Field has really stepped up their community outreach and involvement. Because of this, I was treated to a courtesy flight in a T38 jet this past week.

I will probably write a separate article on the whole amazing day I spent at Randolph, and in the air over South Texas. It was truly and experience of a lifetime. But what I want you to know is that on that day, I was honored to be among some of the most intelligent, skilled, dedicated and patriotic warriors on the planet. I personally witnessed the fact that these guys are VERY good at what they do, and we all need to be thankful for their service and dedication. I have every confidence they have the skills and abilities to protect us, if they are allowed to use them.

So next Thursday, please give thanks for our first responders and for our Armed Forces. Should something as awful as Paris happen here, they will be here to offer aid and protection. I know, because I've seen them in action.

Gosh, I love this town!