

## UPCOMING EVENTS

Date and Time	Event	Location	Details
Sept. 1 - Oct. 31	"One Book, One American Fork," Community reading activity	American Fork Library, 64 S. 100 E.	Book selection begins. Come check out the books and vote. We will all read the top pick later this year.
Sept. 1	Fall Story Time registration begins	American Fork Library, 64 S. 100 E.	
Sept. 1	Registration begins for full STEAM Ahead (Science, Technology, Engineering, Art and Math)	American Fork Library, 64 S. 100 E.	You may register online at <a href="http://afc.city.org/Library">http://afc.city.org/Library</a> .
Sept. 3, from 7 to 8 p.m.	September's Teen Thing	American Fork Library, 64 S. 100 E., Gardner Community Room	Read-a-thon. Bring a pillow and a book. Treats will be provided. Ages 11 to 16.
Sept. 4, 11, 18 and 25	Happy Valley Farmers Market	Robinson Park	Fresh produce, crafters, entertainment and family activities
Sept 10, 17 and 24	Especially for Teens	Room B, Historic City Hall, 31 Church St.	Registration fee is \$25. All art materials will be provided.
Sept. 12	Carnival of Cavemen - American Fork High School Fundraiser Event	American Fork High School, Caveman Drive	Fundraiser for 2016 Seniors and clubs with Food Trucks, teacher dunk tank, climbing wall, games and booths.
Sept. 17	Create Cooking Class	Library, Community Room, 64 S 100 E	Summer Vegetables
Sept. 26	Color Me Fall	Room 3, American Fork Fitness Center, 454 N. Center St.	\$25 registration includes all art materials. Teacher Liz Evans will focus on the study of color and how it is used.
Sept. 19 and 26	Portraits from Photos, Part 2	Room B, Historic City Hall, 31 Church St.	\$25 registration includes watercolor paper.



# American Fork

## city scoop

*The following information by Mayor J.H. Hadfield recently appeared in the Daily Herald.*



Recent reports in the news list American Fork as one of the "most expensive cities," and numbers it in the "worst five" cities, as it relates to government spending.

The information was based on a report created by the Utah Taxpayers Association, a non-profit 'watch dog' group whose mission is: "to assist in bringing about economies, consistent with efficiency, in the administration of our public affairs." For years the group has been known to be an independent voice that holds government accountable for its spending choices. It has been a service and is well respected.

When we read the articles, we were surprised and confused. Especially since last year American Fork was named the most affordable

city in Utah by the well-recognized research group Movoto. We did what any responsible City would do: we looked at the numbers.

### Here's what we figured out: 1. The Association did not use "apples-to-apples" math.

Let's say you live on the American Fork side of the street, and your neighbor lives on the Highland side. Your families are the same size and live in similar homes. You pay similar property taxes, and your kids attend the same schools. You even shop at the same stores and go to the same restaurants.

The difference, based on the collection of sales tax, is that both families are likely shopping, eating at restaurants, and even going to the Fitness Center in American Fork – because that's where a majority of services are. That's great news because we want community vitality, and the collection of sales tax keeps our economy going.

However, in the Utah Taxpayers Association study, they put yours and your neighbor's money from sales tax into the "total taxes collected" in American Fork and divided by *just* American Fork's population. This poor math leads to the false conclusion that all sales tax collected in American Fork is paid by American Fork residents. This isn't true. For example, we have five auto dealerships that generate a great deal of sales tax. According to one of those dealership owners, less

than 30% of sales of those vehicles actually come from our residents.

That makes the assumption that if the certified tax rate (i.e. property tax) goes up, the City is getting more revenue, and it must be spending more.

In truth, the percentage of revenue the City is able to keep from taxes you pay through property tax is relatively small.

For instance, the certified tax rate just adopted, the City's portion of property tax revenue is only 21% of the total tax you pay. The rest goes to the County (9%), Alpine School District (66%), the water district (4%), and a very small amount goes to the State for assessing and collecting fees.

On an annual basis, an independent auditor audits the City. Last year, the City received an unqualified audit opinion; that is the best audit opinion the City can receive. And the City received an Aa3 rating by Moody's.

Some of the things the Tax Payers Association added into the calculation included fines and forfeitures - which are from speeding ticket fines and impact fees (which are not always paid by just our residents). The revenue that the Utah Taxpayers Association used is not taxes or fees carried by *just* American Fork residents.

### 2. The study did not use "apples-to-apples" lifestyle/quality of life comparisons.

## ATTENTION SENIORS

Need help going to the store or to appointments? If so, the Senior Companion Program can help.

Our volunteers help run errands or visit at no cost.

If have questions or want to sign up, call (801) 851-7767 or visit [www.utahcountyhealth.org/seniorcompanion](http://www.utahcountyhealth.org/seniorcompanion).

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Communities are different. Some are “sleeper communities” and some are designed to have a robust economy with jobs, retail, restaurants, parks and other quality-of-life conveniences. We have chosen to be the latter.

Take our Fitness Center, for example. Last year, it ran sports programs that enriched the lives of nearly 6,000 participants and their families. The interesting fact is that half of those participants came from surrounding areas. We charge them higher fees, to give our residents a benefit, but the reality is that having these programs locally is a convenience. Many choose to live here for those conveniences

## AND NOW ... OUR 'TOP' STORY

Last year, a windstorm literally burst the bubble that covers the Fitness Center pool. This bubble, which keeps it open year-round, was ruined beyond repair, so this year the City is adding a new air structure. The City’s insurance policy covered the majority of the cost to replace the structure.

The new “bubble” will have new air handling units, new doors, new lights, additional ventilation, a blue-colored liner on the inside, and a skylight on top. It will be installed Oct. 5 - 10. During that week, the pool and full Fitness Center will be closed for maintenance and locker room renovations.

During the closure, Fitness Center members can take their membership card and receive free admission to the Lehi Legacy Center, Pleasant Grove Community Center or Orem Fitness Center.

Check with the facility you are interested in attending for their operating hours and class schedules.

that allow them to have exceptional youth baseball, soccer, scouts, golf, gymnastics, competitive swimming, and other programs – without driving 20 minutes – for an affordable price.

Our City has a beautiful and innovative Library; dozens of parks, responsive road and utility crews, and its residents are leaders along the Wasatch Front.

We have 28,000 residents and have about 13,000 jobs within the City. We have a state-of-the-art hospital locally, which brings consumer spending, on healthcare services alone, to our City.

And speaking of health and service: the City services so many emergencies (many where the Fire Department transports patients to American Fork Hospital), that our cost per call for emergency services is the lowest in Utah County.

Regardless, our philosophy has been to create a place where people truly want to live, work and play. Most cities say that, but we mean it. And our well-rounded community proves that.

### 3. To help residents, we have made many efficiencies in the past five years.

We now contract out our fleet maintenance to save money, and we have restructured several departments to be more efficient. We use volunteers for many events and committees.

This year, we are holding taxes steady – again – which is remarkable considering that the cost of living has gone up since the last property tax raise. Our population has grown since then as well. And in that time, we have reconstructed major roads such 900 W, 300 W, and 1120 N.

So to our critics who pass judgment, looking at a few revenue sources, rather than at our accomplishments, we say, ‘that’s okay.’ We know our community is thriving, and we are glad to be accountable and truthful about how we manage tax dollars. Do not take their word for it, and do not take our word for it either. Our doors, our records, and our meetings are always open for residents to come and learn for themselves.

## BASEMENT FIRE SAFETY AND PREPARING FOR FALL

As winter approaches, the heat goes up and the risk of fire goes with it. Some precautions can help keep your home fire-safe.

### Early Warning Devices

Install a smoke alarm in the basement. Test the alarm each month, and clean as needed. The basement smoke alarm should be connected to other smoke alarms in your home.

### Utilities

- Maintain easy access to your fuse box or circuit breaker panel.
- Keep the burner access doors on gas water heaters and gas furnaces closed to prevent flames from escaping and starting a fire.

### Housekeeping

- Keep all flammables at least three feet from the furnace, oil burner, wood stoves, water heaters, and other heat-generating equipment.
- Keep oily rags in airtight containers and away from heat sources.
- Trash should not be stored in the basement.
- Washers and dryers should be plugged directly into wall outlets
- Clean lint filters every time you use the dryer. Clean the dryer vent ductwork every year.
- Keep stairs free of clutter and safe for quick exit in an emergency.



### Election Day Volunteers

The City Recorder’s Office is looking for registered voters to be poll workers for the General Election on Nov. 3. Volunteers must be available to work from 6 a.m. to 9 p.m. on Election Day.

To volunteer, please call (801) 763-3000.

## MUSEUM HOURS CHANGE IN SEPT.

The Daughters of the Utah Pioneer Museum is currently closed, but it will be open on Saturday, Sept. 26 from 1 to 6 p.m., to celebrate State Museum Day.

After that, it will be closed until June 2016, with the exception of group tours (by appointment only).

For reservations, call Karen Adams, Museum Director, at (801) 756-3725 or LaDawn Carter, Assistant Museum Director, at (801) 756-8150.

*The American Fork Chamber of Commerce invites you to a meet-and-greet featuring City Council hopefuls:*

*Kevin J. Barnes*

*Brett Crowther*

*Brad Frost*

*Monica Howard*

*Robert Shelton*

*Allen Simpson*

*Oct 24, 2015, from 8 a.m. -10:30 a.m.  
in the Intermountain American Fork Hospital  
Conference Room at 170 N. 1100 E.*