

Another way to look at Bethlehem as “the jewel of the Lehigh Valley”

The Bethlehem Gadfly City government January 8, 2020

 *Latest in a series of posts on City Government* 

Gadfly has been thinking a lot about Bethlehem as the “jewel of the Lehigh Valley.”

That is the climactic phrase in Mayor Donchez’s annual op-ed on the state of things in our city published in the [January 3 Morning Call](#).

The core of his metaphor is a series of achievements by the Mayor and his administration: financial stability, public safety improvements, recreation projects, a Climate Action Plan, and so forth.

All excellent accomplishments supportive of the jewel metaphor.

But for Gadfly, the Mayor’s examples don’t go far enough.

Those things are the jobs of the Mayor and the City staff. We expect them to do these things. And we value them for doing them so well. For we know that many City administrations do not.

But for Gadfly what contributes mightily to his feeling that Bethlehem is a jewel of a city is what he sees ordinary people do “for” the City unrelated to their jobs.

Gadfly’s examples are random and incomplete as he sits here this morning anxiously awaiting the president to speak on the Iran conflict.

But when Gadfly thinks of Bethlehem as a jewel of a City, he thinks mainly of such things as:

- Touchstone Theater's Festival UnBound
- the work of a handful of women in Bethlehem Backyards for Wildlife
- EAC member Brian Hillard delivering a report on electronic vehicles at the Bethlehem Parking Authority
- ubiquitous Kathy Fox
- indefatigable Stephen Antalics
- the wonderful Bethlehem Momentors
- the twenty-two enthusiastic but respectful candidate supporters at Monday's Council meeting

This is a woefully inadequate list, hastily done. C'mon Mr. President, get to the microphones. But do you get what Gadfly means.

What has always impressed Gadfly is the high quality of the people who participate.

Not because of a job but more of something like a calling to perform service.

My list could go on and on. And you will have your own.

But I hope you catch my drift.

There are a lot of wonderful individual people who make Bethlehem "a jewel."

And Gadfly tries to give them a place to shine.