Leadership Caldwell provides fantastic learning opportunity

- Dec 7, 2014

A couple of weeks ago, a group from the Caldwell Chamber of Commerce's most recent class of Leadership Caldwell visited the Idaho Press-Tribune offices. They got a chance to look at the presses (really, the best part of the tour), they got to see how ads and pages are built and they got to sit in on an editorial board meeting to see how we come up with our editorials.

The Leadership Caldwell group spends one day per month learning about the community of Caldwell, visiting businesses and institutions to learn about such topics as agriculture, tourism and history, public safety, commerce, media, government, education and health care.

We talked quite a bit about Leadership Caldwell at the Chamber Board's annual retreat on Friday. We talked about branding it perhaps a little differently, as some people might think it's an actual "leadership" class, teaching its members how to be better leaders.

In reality, it's more of a class "for" people who are leaders, and it educates the participants about facets of the community they may not already be aware of. Class participants also have an exclusive opportunity to meet with community leaders and get behind-the-scenes looks at Caldwell's more important institutions. In our case, not many people other than the editorial board members themselves get to sit in on an editorial board meeting and see how we come to our editorial decisions.

So "Leadership Caldwell" may be a bit of a misnomer. It's more of a "Discover Caldwell" or "Explore Caldwell," as some suggested at our retreat Friday.

If you're interested in being a part of the Leadership Caldwell class of 2015 or would like more information about it, call the Chamber at 459-7493.

Have you heard about these international trips that the Caldwell Chamber of Commerce has been putting together? I've heard nothing but good things about the last trip the chamber organized to China.

The chamber is putting together another trip next year to China. It has already had a couple of informational meetings about it, including a standing-room-only meeting in Boise and a capacity meeting in Caldwell. The chamber gets a deal on a group package trip to China for $2,399 per person, which includes air travel from Seattle, four- and five-star hotel accommodations, three meals per day, all transportation within China, bus tours, seven of China's 10 "wonders of the world," tour guides, admission to the tour sites and all taxes, gratuities and fees.

The trip is planned for Oct. 5-15. If you're interested, contact Chamber executive director Theresa Hardin at thardin@caldwellchamber.org or call her at 459-7493. This is available for everyone, not just businesses or chamber members.

Speaking of great events, the second-annual Farm to Fork, Dinner on the Creek event is going to happen again next year. This is a special dinner on the wooden bridge at Sixth Avenue over Indian Creek in downtown Caldwell.

My wife, Nicola, and I attended the event this year, held in mid-September. The table was covered with white linens, candles and handmade decorations. The five-course meal was made using locally grown ingredients and prepared by experienced local chefs. And all the wine was local.

When Hardin said at our board retreat that tickets for next year's dinner were almost sold out, I had a panic attack because I didn't want to miss it.

I think this is going to become a longtime tradition. It's a fundraiser for the chamber, but it's also a chance for Caldwell to show off what it has to offer.

The food was prepared by chefs from Horsewood Catering and Indian Creek Steakhouse, both Caldwell-based businesses. The wine came from Huston Vineyards, Indian Creek Winery and Hat Ranch Winery, and the food was from local farms.

Tickets last year were $125 per person. If you're interested in attending next year's dinner, call the chamber at 459-7493 or email info@caldwellchamber.org.

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