

June 20, 2025: Harrisburg-Breal-sous-Montfort Sister City Celebration

Mayor Robert Duncan Speeches

Opening greeting:

Good evening Breal, Mayor Ethore, the Breal city council, and distinguished guests of Breal. Good morning Harrisburg, Oregon; all of whom you will meet very shortly as the meeting continues. It is with great honor I welcome you all and we are very eager and excited to not only see you but to hear your voices on this first day of what we all hope will be the foundation for a wonderful relationship for generations to come.

Mayor Duncan: Closing Speech:

As many might already know through my previous letter to you, my wife Donna and our family purchased the Quinn home in 1994 and moved in just before the Fourth of July. We found out quite quickly the history of the home. It has weighed heavy on our hearts when we think of the grief the Quinn family must have endured and the sadness that must have been a part of the home. My wife and I raised two amazing children who have gone on to be amazing adults with families of their own. Our grandsons run and play throughout the house the way I'm sure the Quinn boys did.

It has been a great honor to live in the home and we have over the years felt more like caretakers of the house than the owners. It might seem out of place but at times mostly in the quiet of the morning when I'm in a time of reflection, I feel such a gratitude for the Quinn family; I imagine their family times and interactions. The servitude of men and women like Lt. Quinn has made the liberty we have possible. He offered up his life and the life he could have lived in the future so we all could live out the freedoms we have over these many years. I'm not sure if you feel the same way but at times I feel like my gratitude is never enough, that the words I need to speak to those who have given so much will never be adequate to express how I truly feel in my heart.

We can always say thank you but Breal has shown us a better way by living and sharing the gift of thankfulness and gratitude and passing that gratitude down to their children, not only as individuals but together as a whole community. Breal, you have defeated evil by not allowing it a place in your heart. You are not the darkness you endured; you're the light that refused to surrender. Time doesn't lie, it just slowly exposes the truth and Harrisburg has been privileged enough to see the truth of Breal and its heart of gratitude to those who were willing to risk all for all.

I'm sure many of us have heard the saying "walk a mile in another man's shoes and you'll understand him". Oh, my goodness; a son of Breal has taken that saying to the extreme. I speak of course of Harrisburg's newest honorary citizen, Jean-Paul Favrais. Jean-Paul; you dear man. You have not only walked one mile with the sons of America, but you have walked many, many miles with them. I feel they were there with you, as you took their families with you, hand in

hand. My hope is you know you have wiped the years of tears away from the cheeks of Moms and Dads and Brothers and Sisters. You had no answers for their deeper questions; only where and when their loved one died. My guess is you went to sleep at night wondering if you could have done more. Sleep well, dear friend of Harrisburg, you did very well and Breal and Harrisburg and many other towns across America are more peaceful because of your efforts.

I will close with Scripture, Matthew 5:9 "Blessed are the peace makers for they will be called children of God". Breal, Jean-Paul; you wonderful children of God. My prayer for you to the God I know and love is for peace. Peace as you rise, peace as you slumber, for peace and hope for your future. It truly has been the honor of a lifetime for me to be able to address you and express my appreciation, not only as the Mayor of Harrisburg but also as an American citizen.

Warm Regards,

Mayor Robert (Bobby) Duncan