

County Commission Update: Happy Holidays!

By Wade Mathews, Public Information Officer

As the song says “It’s the most wonderful time of the year...” And I have to agree. The Thanksgiving and Christmas holidays are my favorites. I was fortunate to spend time with my loved ones last month for Thanksgiving and look forward to spending more time with family this Christmas.

This season is the time to reflect on all the blessings we enjoy. I do have so much to be thankful for. I have a wonderful, supportive family, extended family, and friends. I feel very fortunate to have good health. And I’m grateful for this great country and for the beautiful world we enjoy.

Tooele County has many bounties as well. During these challenging economic times, Tooele County has a relatively low unemployment rate. New businesses continue to locate in Tooele County. And our local governments have so far been able to provide the services we expect without raising taxes.

The County Commissioners know that times are hard for most of us and want to be able to increase economic growth in the county as much as possible. The county government is tightening its belt as well, in response to a very tight budget. In spite of that, the Commission Chair Colleen Johnson recognizes the many things she is thankful for. She wrote the following:

“I love this time of year, and am grateful that I live in such a wonderful county. The people of Tooele County are willing to help and give all year round. Whenever there is a need at Relief Services or the Food Bank, the response is always unbelievably generous.

“Every year we become a bigger community, but the small town feeling is still here. We care about our neighbors and those in our community that are struggling or having trouble finding employment or any kind of difficulties. Individuals and businesses all work together to make sure everyone has a good holiday season.

“I applaud all the businesses and individual groups that helped provide Thanksgiving dinners to anyone who wanted one. What a great reputation for our community to have, and a wonderful blessing for our citizens.

“Our family has always been big into Christmas lights and decorations. Each year it seems it gets a little more time consuming, but it is great fun to see a family looking at our lights and see the smiles on the kids’ faces. We love to drive around and see all the different houses that are lit-up and decorated. Search and Rescue does a great job with the tree on Little Mountain, Tooele City lights up Veterans Park, and Grantsville’s Fire Department has a great display.

“I think it’s a great time to reflect and be grateful for all we have here in Tooele County. It’s wonderful to have businesses and industries that provide jobs. I’ve always said that Tooele County is so great because of our diversity and because of our closeness as a community.”

We are very fortunate to live in these times and in this place. There are so many benefits we enjoy. Unfortunately, there are still many who are suffering more than others, some who may not have the means to provide any Christmas gifts for their families, some who may not be able to put a Christmas turkey or ham on the dinner table. There are those who may be alone and lonely.

There are things we who have more can do for those who have less. First of all, it always helps to shop locally. Your dollars will most likely stay in the community and help businesses and the economy grow here. Your tax dollars will stay here, adding to the budgets that provide essential government services.

You can also buy a little extra food and take it to the Utah Food Bank in the Tooele County Relief Services building (38 South Main St., across from the County Building). You can donate coats and clothing to Relief Services. You can make a donation to Youth Services. You can purchase one or two extra toys and drop them off in the Toys for Tots box located in the County Building at 47 South Main Street.

Of course there are many other things we can do to help those in need, such as raking leaves or shoveling driveways for those that may not have the health or ability to do so. I know if we try to do some of these things, this spirit of giving and of service will put a new light on our own Christmas experience, making the holidays seem a little brighter than before.

One thing I need to try to do, and encourage everyone else to do, is slow down the pace a little bit this holiday season. We should slow down enough during the day-to-day hustle and bustle to enjoy the colorful lights and beautiful decorations around us. Listen to some Christmas music. Go to the Tooele or Grantsville Santa parade. But more importantly, we should take the time to visit relatives, especially those that are alone this time of year. Make an effort to mend relationships that have been neglected. And tell those people closest to us that we love them.

Regardless of our personal beliefs, I think this is a time for all of us to remember and hope for peace on earth, good will toward men. I know I do. Merry Christmas!