

Thanksgiving – 2020 - Legislative Report

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HAPPY THANKSGIVING

(Count your many blessings – name them one by one)

In spite of a severe world-wide Coronavirus Pandemic – drought conditions in Texas – one of the most frustrating national general elections that I have ever seen – and missing a lot of our usual interpersonal relationships – there are still many things for which to be thankful. Family – grandkids at a Holiday season and friends (both old and new). Hoping that you and yours have avoided having a bout with COVID-19 – with it's quite severe lasting side effects.

We are nearing the Thanksgiving season – and not all that far from our annual Christmas observance and celebration. With these two important Holidays comes the opportunity to share with those less fortunate. I heard a fellow being asked - “what do you want for Christmas” – and his response being –“for 2020 to end”. In view of the challenges that 2020 has presented – it would be very possible to allow ourselves to adopt a “poor little me” attitude and outlook. But – to be reminded of how fortunate we are – take my dare and visit a VA hospital – or a Children's Hospital.

Now that I have passed the philosophical portion of this report – let's focus on the upcoming Texas legislative session. As I visit with numerous folks who are involved in the legislative process – I find that the general consensus is that this session will be a WHOLE NEW

experience. This applies to members of the legislature – to those of us who work daily with the legislative process – as well as ALL citizens of Texas. No matter how long you have been in the business of Texas state government- the upcoming session will provide you with a new level of education – well beyond GOVERNMENT 101. Never had I dreamed of the barriers and challenges we will face simply presenting our issues to a legislator. At the same time – never had we dreamed of the difficulties that those legislators will have in representation of their own constituents.

To further compound these challenging issues - I do believe that the divide between philosophies and ideals is wider than we have ever before witnessed. There seems to be a general attitude - among even your neighbors - that you have no right to your opinion. This even comes to the point of them becoming irate if you even attempt to state your opinion or discuss an issue with them. Many of us spent years in the military service – in an effort to insure that you (and I) would have the freedom to have varying opinions – and to be able to air those opinions without creating an air of combativeness.

Differences of opinion are an important facet in the business of governing. The willingness to listen to the opinions of others in an open manner is what produces solutions to our problems. Listening to others is one of the most important elements of conversation – one which is extremely difficult for most of us to master. You never know – others MIGHT EVEN HAVE A great idea – or solution – even though it varies from our own.

MONA AND I wish you and yours a Happy and enjoyable Thanksgiving. Enjoying family at this time is most important - Even though extended family gatherings may be conducted by interactive means. Here is a neat idea that you might consider for this Thanksgiving - since we will

not be seeing many of the family. We are going to take a picture of our Thanksgiving dinner – and e-mail or text it to missing family members. They have agreed to do the same for us.