

This Thanksgiving, display an attitude of gratitude

Hopefully there is a time on Thanksgiving Day – between putting the turkey in the oven and planning our Black Friday assault on retailers – that we are actually giving thanks.

Perhaps it's saying thank-you for the recent harvest, as our early American settlers did, but in the more suburbanized areas of the southwest metro area it is more likely about offering our thanks for good health, for family ties, for supportive spouses, or God's many blessings.

Whatever we are thankful for, it's the expression of gratitude – that "attitude of gratitude," you might say – that's important. So important is the act that authors have credited gratitude for being one of the secrets to a person's well-being.

This Thanksgiving, give thanks often ... and if not often, at least well. Just as the southwest-area readers on this page have done.

A Thanksgiving anniversary

This Thanksgiving will be very special to me in many ways. The good lord has blessed my wife, Merry, and I and guided us through some difficult times.

We were blessed with our first grandson, and even though we are unable to visit very often (they live in Maryland) we are able to watch him grow, and keep in touch with the help of today's technology.

We have suffered through tough economic times, with unemployment, and under employment, but that is turning around.

I have started a small business and have seen it grow over the last year, and Merry has again found full-time work.

I will be undergoing some minor surgery the week of Thanksgiving, and Merry will be by my side to help me through my recovery.

But possibly the most special



Ron and Merry Kramer

thing about this Thanksgiving day will be celebrating our 10th wedding anniversary.

Our wedding day was Nov. 24, 2001.

My bride of 10 years is the most important person in my life, and there is no doubt in my mind that I am a better person because of her...

Thank you Merry! I love you!

**Ron Kramer
Chanhassen**

Grateful for Mom

I'm thankful for my mother, who died Oct. 15. Her funeral was the same weekend our large family had planned to gather for her 92nd birthday. (Her 11 children saw this coincidence as an extension of the

exquisite efficiency that characterized Mom.) Growing up on a self-sustaining dairy farm during the Great Depression, she took little for granted and was unimpressed by extravagance. Creativity, hard work and kindness motivated her. She believed that if you could see a better way to do something, then you needed to pursue it. She had

finished college by age 18 but saw nothing spectacular about that. She was simply doing what she could at the time.

The best thing about Mom: She really understood the power of kindness. "Sometimes forgiveness of self is the best bridge to happiness," she said recently when I told her about something I have always regretted. She chose words carefully, to heal and inspire. Thanks, Mom.

**Carla Marie Headlee
Eden Prairie**

Thankful for a great city

I am thankful for the opportunity to live in Prior Lake.

I am thankful to all of the city employees, mayor, City Council and organizations that make Prior Lake a great place to live.

I try not to take living in Prior Lake for granted. I have been to Texas, California and Arkansas. Prior Lake has a lot more to offer in parks, lakes, trails, scenery, facilities and quality of life.

**Steve Pany
Prior Lake**

Life is too short

When I get together with my family, we do the traditional going around the table, stating what we're thankful for. We hear the usual phrases of being thankful for family, friends, jobs, love.

I thought about what I would say this year. I love the spirit of gratitude in general. It makes me feel good to say anything that has to do with thankfulness.

I have been a social worker for 29 years of my life. For the last 12 years, I'm honored to say that I have worked in the field of hospice. I work with people of all ages who have been diagnosed with a terminal illness. I'm involved with the person directly along with working with the family of the patient.

In lieu of that, I have to say that I am thankful for the gift of life. We hear "live life like it's your last day" or "life is short." Ask a person who

A Thanksgiving poem

I wanted to share this story and poem I wrote back in 1996. I still get requests for it from family and friends. We read it as a family together during each Thanksgiv-

ing Day dinner and mail it out to many people every year in November.

**Bill and Marjee Righeimer
Prior Lake**

What Thanksgiving Means to Me

By Bill Righeimer 11/96

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| <u>Turkey</u> | <i>Thoughts of past and present tummy pleasing tidbits – the aroma everybody loves</i> |
| <u>Happy times</u> | <i>Friends – Family – Fun</i> |
| <u>Ancestors</u> | <i>Grandparents and parents – paving the way for us to have a bountiful life</i> |
| <u>Newspapers</u> | <i>Full of holiday circulars – gifty items – food galore and Christmas fun</i> |
| <u>Kindness</u> | <i>Being a good citizen to our fellow man Being good people</i> |
| <u>Sharing</u> | <i>Helping others at all times and especially the less fortunate</i> |
| <u>Giving</u> | <i>Sharing our thoughts and bounties with others</i> |
| <u>Invitations</u> | <i>Tis the Season to party – office – home – family – forget the diets & scales – fun dressing up</i> |
| <u>Voices</u> | <i>Phone calls – connections – happy talk conversations – a feel good feeling in the ears</i> |
| <u>Individuals</u> | <i>Our mothers, dads, brothers, sisters & other relatives & friends – who provide – LOVE – The fuel for life</i> |
| <u>Neighbors</u> | <i>We are all lucky to have good neighbors who are like part of the family</i> |
| <u>God</u> | <i>God provides us multiple blessings for a good life and takes care of those who have provided for or befriended us in our lives – including those who have gone before us. God bless each of us – Happy Thanksgiving to all – here & in our thoughts.</i> |

has a terminal illness how that truly feels. Dying people have taught me how to live. I have met some amazing patients along with their families who have these amazing attitudes of gratitude.

Life is a gift. At times, it's not easy being on this earth. We all have our share of heartaches (some more than

others). I think of the phrase "Life is short." When a 36-year-old person is diagnosed with an incurable cancer, life is short. Too short.

I am truly thankful for the gift of life, whatever time I have been given on this earth.

**Pam Goodman
Chaska**