

Opinion: Tis the Season...

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I recently paid the first half of my property tax bill. When I first scratched enough money together to become the proud owner of a small piece of property in Del Norte County, I genuinely thought I was on my way to putting down roots for life. While I have managed to stay put for fifty years, paying my property taxes in the season meant for giving to others has become a bit of an oxymoron.

Perhaps it is about time where the spirit for giving extends from our local governments to those who pay the bills. You have to ask yourself, “What exactly, are we getting from our local taxing authorities which costs north of a quarter billion dollars”? What! You say, a quarter billion dollars?”

On October 1, the County, the City, the school district, the Harbor, and all other taxing authorities finalized cumulative budgets which exceeded \$250 million. While property taxes represent only part of the overall fleecing of local pockets, one has to ask the question, “What are we, the local “Walmart” shoppers getting for our money”?

In the spirit of the season, we would like to know, as we pony up the first half of our property taxes, feeling a bit uncertain as to the value of services being offered.

Most of us who pay the bills expect a level of benefit from our tax dollars which has been revealed as lacking in any measurable way to those who dutifully pay our taxes each and every year. So much for “Tis the Season...”

The Covid years exposed the dreadful state of our public schools when it comes to educating our youth. At the same time, the poor response revealed a public health lapse costing the local economy dearly. This was followed by the train wreck of fiscal mismanagement at The Harbor and the City's complete disregard for the poor roads and streets in favor of pursuing the fantasy of a "destination" resort on Front Street.

What have I left out? Del Norte County! Yes, the largest offender of the bunch. Tri- Agency, Strategic planning, and "economic development" leading the charge. Public safety, crime, a mere afterthought to the County's biggest grifters, the wine and cocktail crowd of high dollar County bureaucrats.

Are you angry yet?

Being it is the season, it should be an imperative that things will change before the next "Season" is upon us. If I may be so bold as to suggest some "New Year's" resolutions for members of the Board of Supervisors, our largest tax gouger. Supervisor Valerie Starkey should refrain from looking to tax payers' wallets to pay for her version of government "solutions." Supervisor Darrin Short: an empty suit. His contributions as a member of the Board of Supervisors is bereft. Short should probably just resign. Supervisor Joey Borges checking out is not an option, get back to the business of governing. Supervisor Chris Howard needs to go back to "genius" school and "Walk the Walk,"... not just talk about it. Produce some real solutions instead of your incessant " talking."

Finally, Chairman of the Board Dean Wilson, it's the people who pay the bills who need the benefits, not the government. If only New Year's resolutions were that easy to fulfill.

My only resolution for this year is for those of us who pay the bills, something will finally come our way. In the meantime, remember "...tis the season" season and I hope everyone has a great Holiday, and a Merry Christmas and Happy New Year.