



Mayor's Monthly Message

Mayor Elsie Thurman - November 2025

I've given a lot of thought to my final newsletter as mayor, and I keep coming back to something I wrote a year and a half ago because it still captures what matters most to me about this community.

I was inspired by an old Newsweek article by George Will. He told the story of a bicycle in his boyhood town's hardware store window—one he desperately wanted but couldn't have until he earned the money himself. He worked odd jobs and saved, but what stayed with him wasn't the bicycle itself. It was the joy of walking past that store window, dreaming of the day it would be his. When he finally bought it, he discovered something surprising: owning the bicycle wasn't nearly as satisfying as the journey to earn it.

This story describes "the Joy of Earning Versus the Joy of Owning." It's a distinction that applies to any meaningful goal—raising well-adjusted children, building a successful organization, maintaining a healthy budget, or nurturing a strong marriage. The joy comes from the journey, not just the destination.

Serving as mayor gave me a unique vantage point to watch this community work toward shared goals, and I've seen this principle play out again and again. People in Horseshoe Bay, for the most part, understand this distinction. You didn't just arrive here—you chose this place and worked to make it your home. You invest yourselves to get results, and I believe that's a big part of why this community feels different.

One of my favorite Hill Country singers, Thomas Michael Riley, has a line in a song that says, "Happiness isn't something that you find, it's something that you choose." I think that captures something essential about the people here. You're happy because you want to be here, and you value each other for who you are, not what you have. That's not true in every community, not by a long shot.

In this "instant gratification" world, it's tempting to skip ahead, to give our children and grandchildren everything without making them wait; but when we do that, we deny them something precious—the joy of walking past the store window, dreaming of working toward something, and feeling the satisfaction of earning it.

Horseshoe Bay residents are fortunate in so many ways. We live in a beautiful place with amazing opportunities right at our fingertips; but I believe what makes people here truly happy is that most of you didn't skip straight to the Joy of Owning. You earned your way here, and you savored that journey.

As I leave my post as mayor, I find myself profoundly grateful. The time I spent in this role confirmed something I already suspected: I am extraordinarily lucky to call this town my home. Serving you has been a true privilege. You've taught me about resilience, generosity, and what it means to build something worth having together.

Thank you, my friends, for letting me be part of your journey.