

## Plenty to Be Thankful For

### AGRI-VIEWS

by Chuck Otte, Geary County Extension Agent

The weather's been crazy all year. I've been rushing around feeling like I'm going from pillar to post. Just about the time I think I have one thing taken care of three more things pop up literally from the ashes. Does this sound familiar? I think many of us can relate to this. Then along comes Thanksgiving and we don't seem to slow down and we wind up being anything but thankful. In our house we have a lot of balls in the air right now too. It's so easy to get caught up in everything and completely overlook all the good and positive things around us. I hope that sometime in the next few days you will allow yourself to slow down find a quiet place and just think about everything you've got going for you!

It becomes really easy to focus on what everyone else has that you don't have. But that's only material possessions. Someone will always have a nicer car, a newer house, or a longer vacation. There's no way to ever stay a winner in that game. If you've got a warm home with a roof over your head you're doing okay. If there's food on the table on Thanksgiving Day (and every other day for that matter) then you are more fortunate than many people in the world, but even our country and our state. Can you turn on the faucet and get a glass of water that you aren't worried will make you sick when you drink it? Again, many places in the world aren't that lucky, yet these are simple things that we take for granted probably every single day.

In a society where we are daily bombarded with advertisements encouraging us to buy anything we start to correlate things with happiness. You can't buy good friends though. Those truly good friends who help you when you move, that are the first one's there to comfort and console when tragedy strikes, the one's that you can call at midnight. Money can't buy you neighbors that are always there to greet you when you get home in the evening, or watch your house when you are gone on vacation or feed your dog if you have to be away overnight.

I've been blessed with a job that I've had for many years. I'm thankful every morning when I wake up and I'm still looking forward to going to work. I'm thankful that I have co-workers that I can laugh with and share highs and lows with. My co-workers really are like family and I'm blessed to have them. I'm thankful that when I go home at night I know that on most days I've been able to help people with problems and challenges and know that I made their life a little bit better.

I'm thankful that I live where I do. We live in a wonderfully diverse community that has many amazing opportunities for us. What we may not have here, we can likely find within a sixty mile drive. I was in Kansas City recently and was so thankful that I don't live in a big metropolitan area and all the traffic it brings. I'll take the 45 or 60 minute drive to avoid the large amount of traffic like I had in Kansas City. We also have unusual access to public land locally that many parts of Kansas doesn't have. Sure, we don't have an ocean or mountains but we have Milford Lake and limitless vistas of the prairie. Our ability to drive out of town and see horizon to horizon is something that many people in our country rarely get to see.

Yes, it's been a crazy year. Every year is a crazy year. Let's move beyond that, beyond the hustle and bustle of Thanksgiving week and day and just unplug. Unplug from the television and the phone and focus on people, whether it's just you and that special someone else, or an entire house full of family. Focus on the people and all that you have been blessed with. Because taking a few minutes to do this will help you realize how much you also have to be thankful for!