



Mayor's Message to the Community

Friends and neighbors,

As this craziest of years draws to a close, I'd like to express my gratitude to each and every one of you for your efforts on behalf of our amazing community. It's been an incredibly frustrating year, and many of you have had to endure a myriad of hardships: physical, emotional and/or financial. You name it, we've had to deal with it. I ache for those of you who've lost loved ones, had to experience months of isolation and loneliness, or faced financial challenges you weren't sure how you'd overcome.

We owe a huge debt of gratitude to our front-line workers, from Ouray County Health to everyone in emergency services, at Mountain Medical, and the countless others too numerous to name. Please know how grateful we are for your service to everyone, resident and visitor alike. Thanks as well to the donors who created resources like the Ouray County Response Fund, which provided much-needed support to so many, and will continue to do so well into 2021 and beyond. Last, but certainly not least, a big thank you to all the county's businesses, who've had to find their way in the midst of a constantly shifting set of circumstances and have done so valiantly. We wish you a new year that gets us all back in the black.

As we enter the new year, we know that we face many more months of impacts from the pandemic, yet the promise of vaccines should give us hope that we'll eventually return to some semblance of normalcy, hopefully by spring or summer. And of course, that means we need to continue to do the things that will keep our numbers down and ensure that our hospitals and clinics don't get overwhelmed. Increasing numbers of vaccinated individuals won't eliminate that need for many months yet, so don't let down your guard, despite how tiresome the protocols may be. This is even more important now that we're starting to see new strains of the virus emerging. We've done a great job so far, and I know we can continue to as well.

I want to end on a positive note and reiterate how incredible our community is and how lucky we all are to live here. Our relatively low numbers are a testament to the people of Ouray County, and our willingness to do whatever is necessary to protect each other. I'm so proud of our community, our County, and everyone who has played their part, however small, in helping us get through this extraordinary time in our history. It's not over yet, but I'm confident, as the days start to get longer, that we're beginning to see the light at the end of this long tunnel. I believe that light is the coming of a bright new day. Happy New Year everyone!

John Clark
Mayor
Ridgway