

Guest Commentary:

Take time to help others this holiday

By Rep. Kristi Noem

It's hard to believe Christmas is already around the corner. While kids are more concerned with laying out cookies for Santa and carrots for the reindeer, parents are busy trying to get that last-minute gift for a friend or relative. So as stores fill with last-minute shoppers and Christmas tree farms begin to seem picked over, it's also a good time to

remember the spirit of the holiday season.

Every Christmas morning, I ring a bell to signal the start of our Christmas morning celebration. Even if Cassidy, Kennedy and Booker are awake before the bell rings, they have to wait in anticipation until they hear the bell. It's traditions like this that make the holidays so special to me.

Bells, whether attached

to a sleigh or an ornament, are a universal sound of the holidays. Across South Dakota, the Salvation Army has bell-ringers outside shopping and grocery stores to raise money for their Red Kettle Campaign. This year, money raised goes directly to those impacted by the destruction of Hurricane Sandy, and I was glad to help raise money by ringing the bell in Brookings recently. I am so

thankful that I have a home to return to, but many will be without this holiday season. I hope we all take the time to remember and offer a helping hand to those who may need a pick-me-up.

I'm so blessed to have the opportunity to celebrate the birth of our Lord and Savior with my family, but there are many South Dakotans who are apart from their family and friends this holiday season.

I think of our brave men and women currently serving in our armed forces who spend every day on the job. Recently, I had the opportunity to write cards to our troops overseas and to thank them for their tireless commitment to defend the values our country holds so dear. I would encourage South Dakotans to take the time to do something this

holiday season to share love with our courageous service men and women abroad.

From our family to yours, we wish you a very, merry (and hopefully white) Christmas and hope you have the opportunity to create lasting memories with friends and family.

“WE MAKE A LIVING BY WHAT WE GET. BUT WE MAKE A LIFE BY WHAT WE GIVE.”

~ Winston Churchill

May the holidays fill you with the giving spirit.

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Warm Wishes at Christmas

As the holiday season approaches, our hearts are warmed by thoughts of the many good people we've had the opportunity to serve this year. You've certainly brightened our year! Thank you for your support and loyalty. We look forward to seeing you in the new year.



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