

# CONTRA COSTA TIMES

ContraCostaTimes.com

## Federal Glover: Guest Commentary: Miles to go and promises to keep in the new year

By Federal Glover  
For the Contra Costa Times

Posted: 12/28/2011 01:46:02 PM PST

Updated: 12/28/2011 02:16:12 PM PST

The holidays are a quiet time of year when reflection of the year past and pondering the year ahead occupies my thoughts.

We are still in the throes of a recession although there are signs of a soft recovery. Our unemployment numbers are still way too high even though they have inched lower these past few months.

Housing starts are at a standstill, which does not bode well for the building industry, but investors and homebuyers are taking advantage of the low interest rates and are more active than last year. However, banks are not moving fast enough to adjust mortgages despite the billions of federal dollars given to the industry.

Investors seem to have finally "got it" in regard to the surge of green technology and its future. Despite the high-profile failure of Solyndra, scores of startups in the clean energy and green industry are moving forward as they bring their products beyond the "Model-T" version of their industry.

Despite the constant drumbeat of sensational headlines, serious crimes appear to be going down throughout the state, the nation and most of Contra Costa County, although there are still neighborhoods that need extra care and protection.

The East Bay and South Bay are expected to open new jobs and lead the Bay Area in the new year's recovery. But in the meantime, the county, like many private businesses, has had to tighten its belt, which brings hardship to many workers who have chosen to serve the

public sector rather than the more profitable private sector. The trade-off, of course, is that the Board of Supervisors has tried to minimize layoffs so that some services can continue, even if it means less service. In the private business sector, the way to protect the bottom line is simply to cut jobs to ensure profit. The county's bottom line is not making a profit, but making sure our residents and communities receive the services they need.

The necessary cutbacks are among the hardest decisions I have had to make. How does one compare the worth of ensuring our children are protected from disease to ensuring that our communities are protected from conflagration? How does one decide if steering a young person away from a life of crime is worth more than ensuring that senseless gang shootings don't explode into a war?

Our nonprofits serving the housing, health and nutritional needs of our less fortunate neighbors are doing the best job they can with limited and dwindling resources. But volunteers are coming forth and donations are found (especially at this time of year) to help us keep our faith in humankind.

That is what is so amazing to me and makes me in awe of the potential of good deeds that come forth and which, I believe, are part of our human nature. Toys destined as Christmas presents to poor children are stolen. But countering that is the story that reports that ordinary people -- good people -- quickly replace the toys. Food banks decry the lack of supplies, but our school children, firefighters, police and post office workers are able to collect bags of groceries from generous residents.

**DONATE YOUR CAR!**



The Breast  
Cancer  
Research  
Foundation.

**100% Tax  
Deductible**  
**Free Pick-Up  
Anywhere**  
**We're Available  
7 Days a Week**

**Donating is Fast & Easy!**

**Call Today 877-821-5493**

The Breast Cancer Research Foundation is a classified 501 (c)(3) charity.



# CONTRA COSTA TIMES

ContraCostaTimes.com

For every negative deed, there is a counterweight of good. Out of the darkness, there is light.

As the year ends, we reflect on our decisions of this year. Were there mistakes? Did we do our best to serve the public at large?

And we think about the upcoming year: We try to make peace with our neighbors, the people we serve and ourselves; we pray the economy improves and we plan to implement policies that will improve all of our lives with housing, employment, good health and safe communities.

Happy holidays, everyone!

Supervisor Federal Glover can be reached at [dist5@bos.cccounty.us](mailto:dist5@bos.cccounty.us) or call 925-427-8138.

---



HEARTLAND QUALITY  
**OMAHA STEAKS**  
SINCE 1917

**SAVE**  
up to **64%**

Plus, get  
**3 FREE Gifts**

Special Code: 45069ZWN

To order: [www.OmahaSteaks.com/print71](http://www.OmahaSteaks.com/print71)  
or call 1-877-605-0496

