



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Media Contact:

Dallin Koecher
Communication Manager
(O) 435-654-3666 x 13
(C) 435-671-8488
dallin@gohebervalley.com

Rotary Honors Citizens of the Year, Brent and Mary Kelly

On Tuesday, December 20, at the annual Heber Valley Chamber of Commerce Christmas luncheon, the Heber Valley Rotary Club honored Brent and Mary Kelly as the Rotary's Citizen of the Year for 2016 at UVU Wasatch.

Over 140 people were gathered together as Joe Dunbeck, president of Rotary, presented Brent and Mary Kelly with the award.

"We love this valley, we love living here, and being a part of this community, we appreciate this honor," said a surprised Mary Kelly through tears of appreciation.

Rotary is a service organization that provides service to communities who need help both domestically and internationally. Each year Rotary honors a resident of the Heber Valley with the "Citizen of the Year Award" at the annual Chamber Christmas Luncheon. The award is given to an individual or couple who has exemplified true giving, willingly serve and have positively influenced the community.

Lifelong residents of Midway, Brent and Mary Kelly were chosen for all they do to give back to the community. With a passion for horses and all things cowboy related, the Kelly's have owned and operated some of the state's most successful livestock auctions, and are founding members of the nationally recognized Heber Valley Western Music and Cowboy Poetry Gathering.

Now in its 21st year, the Cowboy Poetry Gathering has grown into one of the top western gatherings in the nations bringing in some 10,000 people to the Heber Valley. Many agree that Mary has been the "backbone" of the gathering for years through finding and contacting the entertainment to scheduling buildings and setting up stages.

Brent, a former seminary teacher, has continued his love for the western way of life through announcing at rodeos at all levels of competition. Honored as a four time RMPRA announcer of the year, Brent's heart is still with the youth from his teaching days and has been announcing the National High School Rodeo Association Finals for 23 years.

Dunbeck noted in presentation that the Kelly's are known for their kind hearts and willingness to serve. They regularly serve at Swiss Days, and spend much of their time helping family, friends and neighbors. Dunbeck said he could not think of better candidates for the Citizen of the Year award than the Kelly's.

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Heber Valley

Rachel Kahler, marketing manager of the Chamber, said the Christmas Luncheon with the Rotary is her favorite event all year because they get to honor together great people like the Kelly's.

"Brent and Mary have done so much for our valley. Everything they do, they do it to the best of their ability and we as valley benefit from all they do," said Kahler.

Brent and Mary are the proud parents of five children and the doting grandparents to 12 grandchildren. Mary received the award for both of them as Brent was out doing what he does - helping friends in need.

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As Utah's Adventure Escape, the Heber Valley office of Tourism, Economic Development and Chamber of Commerce (HVTED) works to promote the Heber Valley and Wasatch County as an excellent destination to live, learn, work, and play for travelers and businesses from Utah and beyond. By providing the local businesses with resources they need to succeed, HVTED helps to stimulate the local economy through tourism, partnerships, and proactive communication. Connect with the #HeberValley at www.gohebervalley.com.