

Why I Like My Community- by Harrison J. Thomas

I live in Holladay, Utah. One thing I like about Holladay is that it has all four seasons. When it's Winter there is snow; when it's Summer it is hot and rainy. In the Fall as far as the eye can see are red, orange, green and yellow leaves all over the place because the streets are lined with trees, many that are so old no one is old enough to recall them being planted. In between these beautiful trees there are large pine trees. My street is built around a very big pine tree. The whole neighborhood meets up at the pine tree for events, holidays and in case of emergencies. In December we all have a tradition of drinking hot cocoa, staying by a fire, visiting with Santa and finally lighting the tree. One of my neighbors said that the tree has been there for 90 years and as long as he remembers, it has always been the gathering place for our neighborhood.

Holladay has an interesting history. Holladay was founded seven days after the pioneers settled Salt Lake City. When that first winter arrived, everyone that settled Holladay went back to Salt Lake except for a couple of men who made holes in the ground and survived the winter. When the first spring arrived, the settlers rushed out to Holladay to claim their piece of the land. John Holladay was named as one of the religious leaders and the area took the name of Holladay Burgh or Holladay's Settlement, and eventually was known as just Holladay. An interesting fact about Holladay that I found is that it is the oldest continuously inhabited settlement in Utah. That's because Salt Lake City was abandoned for a time in 1857 when Johnston's Army occupied the city, but the people in Holladay stayed on their land.

My family was among these settling pioneers. I talked to my mother and she told me that my ancestors, the McDonalds and Livingstons were some of the very first to inhabit Holladay. My great-great-grandfather, Francis McDonald settled in Holladay and had a sheep farm that went from the old Cottonwood Mall area on Highland Drive to the mountains. I discovered that in the Holladay City Hall there is a large picture of my Great-Great Grandfather McDonald's home. It was very inspirational to see that picture of the house.

Once someone moves into Holladay they don't leave. I have two neighbors who have lived here since their childhoods. One neighbor has been living in the neighborhood for 65 years. He's been here since he's been a child and says Holladay is a nice place to live. He's always enjoyed Holladay. Another neighbor I talked to has been living in the neighborhood for a very long time, for about 70 years and he's only left the neighborhood once to go to war. He came back after being gone for a long time. He says he came back because of family and ancestry and because he couldn't think of living anyplace else.

So why do I like Holladay? Holladay is one of the greatest communities in Utah. First, we have a beautiful view of the mountains especially Mt. Olympus. Second, it is a safe community with kind people and different cultures that people are willing to share with the community. There is still some of the old pioneer architecture, which reminds me the fact that I belong here. I hope I can always live in Holladay. I may go away to school or I could be gone for some time but want to return because this is the best community in Utah.

I would like to thank Richard Poullei, Don Reddish, my mother Laura Bresock, my dad Chris Thomas and my grandpa Hal Bresock for talking to me about Holladay and telling me why they love it also mentoring me to embrace my community.