



Mail

Calendar

Contacts

Email Settings

Deleted Items (2)

Drafts

Inbox

Junk E-Mail

Sent Items

[Click to view all folders](#) ▾

15-09 (76)

15-10 (32)

15-11 (23)

15-12 (13)

Manage Folders...



## Holiday Gifts

Janet Cowell [bounce@bounce.myngp.com] on behalf of Janet Cowell [info@cowellfortreasurer.com]

**Sent:** Monday, December 21, 2015 11:37 AM

**To:** Steve Johnston [sjohnston@tueforumclt.org]



Dear Friend,

My favorite toy growing up was the Polly Pal doll my mom made for me in the late 70s. I re-named her "Polly Raye" (Raye is my middle name). My older sister, Lynn, had her own version of the doll ("Polly Lynn") and we had many fun adventures as evidenced by the dirt smudges on Polly Raye's smiling face.



Toys for Tots was this year's chosen charity for the Department of State Treasurer's holiday celebration. This great organization collects and distributes toys as gifts to less fortunate children each December. At our event, collection barrels were overflowing with toys for the Marines who were on hand to receive the gifts.

Seeing this overwhelming number of gifts piqued my interest in the history of toys. They have existed since the beginning of time (I recently learned the stick has officially been labeled the first toy!) and are meant to help children learn and develop into their roles as adults: caring for baby dolls, building forts—or today, staring at a screen (get outside more!).

Toys have often been a privilege. Historically and today, children in many parts of the world don't have the luxury of play and personal development. Even a country as wealthy as ours is not immune from neglect and poverty. Many children don't feel the love that comes with the gift of a toy; they don't have protection to grow and develop. That's why the work of government and charitable organizations like Toys for Tots is so critical to bringing joy and development to the lives of needy children—but you and I play an important role as well.

I've been reflecting on my past 15 years in public service, and I have reached the conclusion that childhood education is the number one way to make a difference in the world. My challenge to myself and all of you is to protect a child, to aid in their growth and development, to show a child love, not only during the holiday season, but all year long. I plan on doing my part and hope you will join me.

This holiday season, we should reflect on the gifts we have and the gifts we can share. As the old saying goes, "it's better to give than to receive."

I wish you and your family a wonderful holiday season and a prosperous new year.

*PS. Given my announcement that I will not be seeking re-election for Treasurer, or election for any office in 2016, this will be my last broadcast email on the campaign side. Look for me on [Facebook](#) and consider [signing up for the Department of State Treasurer's email lists](#).*

Paid for by Cowell for Treasurer

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