



What Rhymes With ?

by Debra L Scifo, ASAC Executive Director

We've got Construction, right here in Denver and that starts with 'C' and that rhymes with 'P' and that stands for People!

Everything we do, I mean everything has a common denominator and that is people. Even when we are reading a good book or enjoying some alone time, people impact us. So how do we deal with people and how do they deal with us. It is in this discussion we can find our challenges and our solutions.

Let's begin with the people of Colorado, we have over 5 million people living in Colorado and projected to have nearly 8 million by 2040. I think it is safe to say that we all see and feel the population growth in and around our towns and our state.

There are people everywhere we go and where we go determines how many people there are. Sometimes I go home and there is one other person there and sometimes 10 or more.

People need things and want to do things and that drives construction. So, while we sometimes are frustrated by the number of people, we are excited about our robust construction industry that is working, working, working to keep up with all these people.

We've got People, right here in our Town and that starts with 'T' and that rhymes with 'C' and that stands for Citizen!

So who are we? You are a citizen and as a citizen, you are entitled as a freeman to the rights and privileges of your country, city or town. The 14th Amendment to the US Constitution speaks to the rights of an American. We hear a lot about what we have as a right and because it is the year of a general election, political candidates are campaigning on the promise of what they will give us or make better for us. I think we agree that as a citizen of the United States and of Colorado you have rights. All branches of government: executive, legislative and judicial are established to protect our rights. Municipalities and communities devote resources to protect and ensure the rights of individuals and business. I want to pose the other side of the coin, what are our responsibilities? Rights carry responsibility, wouldn't you agree?

I hold the belief that if we are meeting our responsibilities, rights will take care of themselves. Like many of you, I am a parent and have raised my children and taught them about citizenship. Now, I am a grandparent and no longer the teacher but the role model. So what are the responsibilities of a citizen?

I'd like to open the discussion by offering the following considerations. Responsibilities of citizenship include: obey the laws, look out for future generations, be an informed voter, defend the Constitution, pay your allegiance to America and, last but not least, the responsibility to be a good person. I cannot say it more perfectly than Samuel Adams did in 1779, "*A general dissolution of principles and manners will more surely overthrow the liberties of America than the whole force of the common enemy. While the people are virtuous they cannot be subdued; but when once they lose their virtue then will be ready to surrender their liberties to the first external or internal invader.*"

Boiling our responsibility down to being a good person means that we take care of one another, take care of ourselves and our family, work, play, take care of our environment, learn as much as we can about as much as we can, support a



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cause that supports me and to seek out ways to make a positive difference.

We've got Citizens right here in our Town and that starts with 'T' and that rhymes with 'Me'.

I have abilities and I need to use them to meet my responsibilities. You have abilities, they are different than mine. You and I may share the same abilities, but you may be more skilled and adept than I, teach me and show me how to be better.

I have privilege and opportunity and I need to use them to meet my responsibilities. You have privilege and opportunity, they are different than mine. You and I may share the same privilege and opportunity, mine may be greater than yours, and I will share those with you and help you to be better.

I have resources and information and I need to use them to meet my responsibilities. You have resources and information and they are different than mine. You and I share our resources and information and we are better.

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The business of construction is challenging. The business of construction feeds my family. The business of construction builds our towns, communities and our nation. Are you meeting your responsibilities? How are you using your abilities, privilege, opportunities, resources and information so that we can be better?

Together and collectively we are the people! Hmmm, I've read that somewhere let me see? Wherever you are in life you can contribute. Whether you are a learner, leader, mentor, worker, helper . . . whatever you are, do it well and you will be a game changer.