

The Giving Bank

By Annika Lund

There are community banks, and there are banks for the community. Town & Country Bank in St. George is certainly a bank for the community. As Washington County's only locally owned and headquartered bank, Town & Country has taken the traditional banking model and turned it on its head—all the while delivering what its customers and the community at large seem to want.

Before the bank opened, organizers polled Southern Utahns to see what their "dream bank" might look like. Town & Country listened. When they heard that people didn't like standing in teller lines, they decided to give

they'd like access to products they couldn't find elsewhere. Again, Town & Country listened, and introduced a debit card that gives holders time-of-purchase discounts at hundreds of local merchants. Customers benefit by keeping more money in their pocket, and local businesses benefit from increased traffic.

Owners of businesses who were polled said they had little time to run to a bank, and that it would be nice if a bank could come to them. Town & Country responded by sending a free business courier to its commercial customers to collect non-currency deposits, deliver documents and provide onsite notary service.

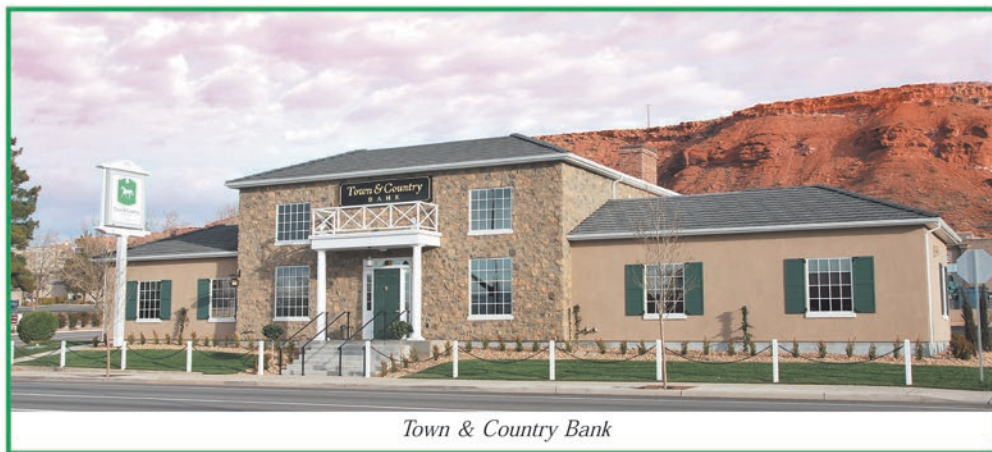


CEO Bruce Jensen presents \$25 savings account award to a student

people what they wanted: in-bank customers are comfortably seated in a semi-private setting with a "concierge banker" who can handle virtually any transaction. The new concept is only now coming into vogue at other banks—seven years later!

People polled also said

These innovations have helped propel Town & Country Bank to prominence in both the industry and the community itself. So successful has Town & Country been (with its profitability consistently among the top 3-5 percent of all U.S. banks), it likes to show something in



Town & Country Bank

return to the community it serves. CEO Bruce Jensen says, "People here have been good to us, so we like to give back to the community in as many ways as we can." Those ways include free weekly concerts held in the bank's great room, free seminars on financial and money management topics, donations to charity, and sending bankers into area schools to help teach business skills and banking basics.

Perhaps the grandest example of giving back to the community was the bank's first annual "Community Appreciation Event" held in April. Country music star Collin Raye performed at no charge for 1,000+ people in the bank's parking lot as free lunches were served. At the same time, the bank had arranged for free document shredding, free coin appraisal and free jewelry appraisal for attendees. Hundreds of giveaways, including a flat screen TV, a mini iPad and other meaningful gifts were given as door prizes. One attending couple later wrote Jensen to say, "How fortunate for all of us that Town & Country Bank is part of our community."

Little wonder that Utah Business magazine named Jensen as its "2015 CEO of the Year" and Western Banker magazine named him as their "2015 Community

Banker of the Year". No one can be sure of what Jensen

next, but one thing is for sure: it'll be what the community



Country music legend Collin Raye performs in the bank's parking lot

and Town & Country will serve up to the community

wants, not what bankers think the community wants.

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