MAYOR'S MESSAGE ***December 31, 2020***

For months, we have all heard people say "I can't wait until 2020 is over" and "when will this year end?" It's easy to understand why folks look forward to the arrival of 2021 considering what a sad and difficult year 2020 has been. Traditionally, those of us who are "of a certain age" try not to wish-away time; however, I think it is safe to say that we are all looking forward to the new year's arrival and the better times we all hope will come our way next year.

As this unforgettable year draws to a close, and we reflect on the hundreds of thousands of lives that were lost, as well as the milestone events that didn't happen or had to be drastically altered, the isolation that many people were forced to endure, and the countless gatherings that were cancelled, this is the perfect time to acknowledge all of the goodness that we have witnessed amongst the chaos – and specifically, the fine people who rose to the occasion and made a difference in the lives of others.

For example, think about our healthcare workers, who are on the front lines of this pandemic. If you know a doctor, a nurse, a home healthcare provider, or anyone else who works to keep others healthy during these difficult times, please be sure to remind him or her how grateful you are for their efforts.

There are also many other people who have stepped-up to the plate and helped get us through this unusual year. That list includes our first responders and the other folks who are always there to protect us, including our police officers, firefighters, emergency medical responders and beach patrol employees, who provided the necessary services we all needed to keep us safe and secure throughout this year.

If you have a child who is in school, I am sure you will join me in thanking all of our nation's teachers, who faced unprecedented challenges while educating their students in 2020. Children are our most precious resource, and a good education is a priceless gift that they will carry with them always – thanks to their teachers.

I am also very grateful to the countless volunteers in our community, who did all they could to make this year seem more "normal" for our residents and visitors, including our Beachcomber Tour Guides, our local religious organizations, the Sea Isle City Chamber of Commerce, VFW Post 1963 and the Post's Auxiliary, AARP Chapter 710, the members of the Commodore Club, our local Boy and Girl Scouts, our two local Yacht Clubs, and everyone else who gave their time and talents in different ways.

My thanks also go to the members of our local business community, many of whom had to re-think, adapt, and utilize their creativity to safely offer the goods and services we rely upon and enjoy.

The members of our local municipal support organizations also deserve our thanks, including Sea Isle City's Planning and Zoning Boards, Environmental and Tourism Commissions, Recreation Committee, School Board, and all the other people who help make our community the great place it is. It took some effort, but each of those groups – and others – continued to move forward with their agendas throughout 2020, and for that I am extremely grateful!

My sincere thanks also goes to the members of City Council, who clearly love this community and are always a pleasure to work with. Thank you Council Members Edwardi, Feeley, Gibson, Kehner and Tighe!

Furthermore, I want to thank our municipal employees, who have not missed a beat during this pandemic, including those who keep us safe, who pick-up our trash, who ensure that our town is in good working order, who keep the fresh water flowing in and the not-so-fresh sewer waste flowing out, who ensure that justice is always served, who help keep the lines of communications open, who entertain and enhance the lives of our people, and who continually remind others that Sea Isle City is a great place to live-in and visit.

Finally, I am very thankful for all of the people of Sea Isle City – our year-round residents, our seasonal home-owners, our visitors, and everyone who loves this community. Thank you all for your patience and understanding when we had to cancel events and make other difficult decisions – all of which were done in the interest of public safety and your wellbeing.

All of the people I just mentioned have proven that roadblocks can be navigated, seemingly impossible goals can be reached, that the darkest night is always followed by dawn, and that there is nothing we can't accomplish if we work together! Thank you all!

As we eagerly await the arrival of 2021 and the better times we all hope and pray will come with it – including the success of the COVID-19 vaccine and an end to this pandemic – let's remember that this is not the time to let our guards down. With that in mind, I ask everyone to continue the good work we started earlier this year and renew our commitment to wearing face masks, practicing social distancing and avoiding crowds. These are the best ways to make sure that we will have a much better year ahead, we can return to some form of normalcy in 2021, and we will be able to enjoy all of the events and activities that have made Sea Isle City famous for years to come!

I also ask that we all keep the individuals who will not be with their loved ones on New Year's Eve in our thoughts and prayers, including all of our healthcare workers, first responders, and the men and women of the United States military who are serving around the world. Let's never forget the sacrifices they continue to make for others.

Please know that you have my best wishes for a happy, healthy and safe 2021; remember that we are all one Sea Isle City and together we will be stronger than ever; and don't forget the words of that famous Frank Sinatra song: "The best is yet to come, and won't it be fine!"

Smile…You're in Sea Isle!



Mayor Leonard C. Desiderio

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