

Remembering 2020

By CHIEF PAUL TOMASI,
CARMEL POLICE DEPARTMENT



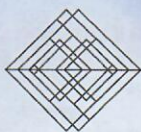
Each year, I like to reflect on the previous year. Often, I reflect on the accomplishments of the previous year, personal growth and department accomplishments. As I do so for 2020, my focus has been less about accomplishment and more about how we, collectively as a community, have responded to the multiple challenges placed before us. The pandemic, fires and social unrest all have brought varying challenges for us all, yet the level of care and compassion displayed by our community has been remarkable.

I am extremely proud of our police, fire and ambulance departments for their dedication during this past year. Working through a pandemic, while maintain the safety of the public has not been easy. Each of our dedicated first responders knows the dangers involved and they continue to serve without hesitation. I am humbled and proud to work with the finest men and women who truly believe in delivering the highest level of service possible, despite the risks placed before us. In our department, our motto is "*Community Service with Pride*". I realized that this isn't just a motto we follow in the police department but a motto our entire community can share. In addition to your first responders, all of the City employees have stepped up to continue to provide services despite the challenges of having closed offices. Each department has found new ways to hold meetings, connect with the community and continue the high level of service our community expects.

I am very appreciative of where I work and the community I serve. Over the past year I've witnessed a community come together to solve problems, band together to support and care for one another. Partnerships, collaboration, and acts of generosity highlight my memories of 2020. There are many examples to choose from but those that immediately come to mind include a group of residents back in March that teamed up to help many of our seniors during the shelter in place order. Carmel Neighbors was formed to help our most vulnerable population to ensure they received the help they need while having to shelter at home. The group carefully crafted a safe way to get our most vulnerable needed help.

Over the summer our Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) and our Volunteers in Policing (VIP's) were called into action to help us with the closure of the beach. These dedicated volunteers did a fantastic job during stressful times to ensure everyone followed the rules. Without their help we couldn't not have safely and effectively protected the community during these closures. Their efforts are greatly appreciated. Over the past year we have actually increased our volunteer crew to include a number of new resident volunteers who are eager to help, further demonstrating the caring nature of our community.

To further add to the challenges this past year, we faced multiple devastating fires this past year. The fires forced the evacuation of thousands of people, including neighbors and friends, with many losing their homes. Once again, it was the community that came together to help. What started out as a plan to help fire victims by a Carmel Lions Club (Mission Trail Lions) grew into multiple Lions clubs from the region banding together to sell tri-tip dinners to raise money for the victims of the fires. In a single day, the Lions clubs raised over \$10,000 to help provide relief for the victims of the fires.



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I am also grateful at how our restaurateurs and small businesses have persevered and worked together with the City to find creative ways to continue to provide services. Having to endure three months of being shut down was both challenging and trying but we worked together to figure out new ways for businesses to provide services while complying with State regulations. I am overwhelmed with the level of compassion and care I have seen from our Carmel Residents Association and groups like Carmel Cares as they look for ways to help our City during these challenging times.

So, as I look back on 2020, I do so proudly of the human spirit that is alive in our village. The care and compassion we have seen amongst ourselves, despite the challenges is something I hope we can all take away from a challenging year and continue into 2021.



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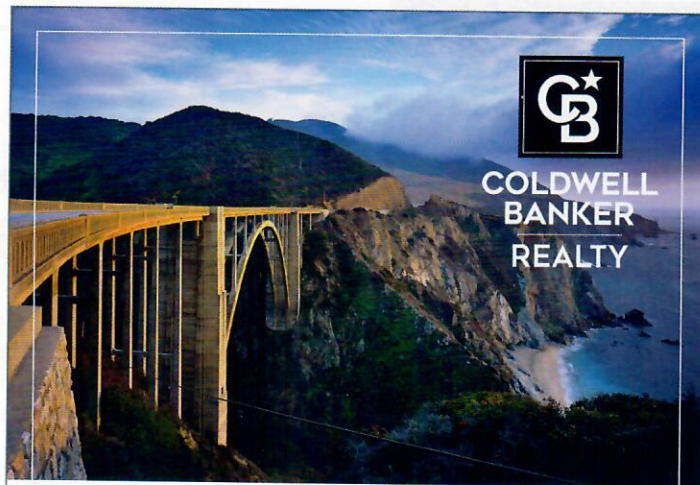
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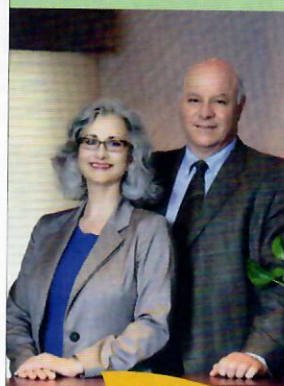
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