

As you read this, our community and our nation have just completed a very contentious election cycle. Let me express my personal gratitude to each candidate that made the brave decision to place their names before the voters in order for a chance to serve our communities. Their shared willingness is a testimony to the staying power of the principles set forth by our Founding Fathers and a continuation of the clear vision of our country first realized long ago.

And let me thank those who believed in the principles of their candidate or their position on an issue and got involved in the process. But even more importantly, thank you to the thousands who voiced their opinion by casting their vote and participating in the very core of our citizenship.

Now that this election is over, let us remember the values of our country and celebrate the gift that we all share, the gift of living in America, by joining to work toward a better community and nation. This is the "special genius" of our process...that following divisiveness, we can join our hearts and minds together to move forward, unified in our goal to better our community, our country and ourselves.

And what better holiday to celebrate after an election than Thanksgiving, where we can all focus on the many blessings in our lives? If you are looking for a way to balance out the calories from the many traditional indulgences of the day, consider participating in the 21<sup>st</sup> annual Turkey Trot 5K benefitting Seniors First, a wonderful charity in our community. For information check out, [www.seniorsfirstinc.org](http://www.seniorsfirstinc.org). And if you want to share your blessings with others on this day, there are many other worthwhile charities that will be serving meals to those in need—the Coalition for the Homeless, Salvation Army and Ronald McDonald House just to name a few.

And while Thanksgiving is a wonderful November holiday, let us not forget that November is also the month where we take time to remember our veterans. Someone once said that, "It is easy to take liberty for granted, when you have never had it taken from you." Please remember this month to give thanks also for the men and women of our armed forces, both past and present, who continue to risk bravely their lives in order to provide all Americans with the invaluable gift of freedom. With that in mind, I look forward to seeing you at our City's Veterans' Day parade on November 13<sup>th</sup> and appreciate your continued support of our Great City!