

Happy Holidays to All as We Bid ‘Adieu’ to Two Pennsauken Friends

I hope all our residents had a great Thanksgiving holiday and now we're all gearing up for Christmas and the New Year.

I know for a lot of people, Christmas is an exciting time but for others, it can be filled with extra work and anxiety. I hope everybody can take a deep breath and try to sit back and enjoy the holidays for whatever it brings.

It amazes me that every Christmas, we all go running around like crazy to get shopping and things done and whether it's Christmas Eve or Christmas Day, the time spent with family and friends is usually glorious.

So as I'm pulling out my Christmas lights and decorations and crawling around on the roof and putting lights around the windows, I remember that usually after getting everything up, I find a string of lights doesn't work. I think most of us can relate to that. Well, instead of letting it get you down, I suggest you just stop and remember the faces of the children filled with excitement and anticipation of Santa Claus coming.

I am looking forward to Christmas Eve when we have friends and family over and I'm also looking forward to Christmas Day when Ellie and I spend the day with our five children and their spouses and significant others for dinner. Sometimes I just sit there and listen to all the conversations, all the noise and all the craziness and it just brings a warm feeling into my heart.

The holidays help us forget about our problems and issues for awhile. But please remember to thank the man upstairs for all the positive things we have in our lives.

As this year comes to an end and we look forward to a new year with renewed hope, there are some changes ahead.

After 29 years, my good friend and former running mate, Bill Orth, has decided to retire from public office. All of us in town are going to sorely miss him. In some circles, he was known as "Mr. Pennsauken." He is definitely a visionary, definitely loves Pennsauken and wanted nothing but the best for Pennsauken.

Over the years, he has done many good things for this town and its people. I'm sure those many people who were touched by him will agree.

On the positive side, Bill is staying in town, not moving, and he'll be there if we need him. I know I can always pick up the phone and ask for his advice and counsel.

Hey Bill, words can't express how much you mean to me and my family. I want to wish Bill and his family a very Merry Christmas, super future and nothing but good things.

Now let me talk about another positive aspect of my life. About 8 years ago, I met this very special lady. Her name is Karen Kennedy-Hall, who is the editor of this paper.

When you're the Mayor of Pennsauken, you have the honor to write a monthly column and the times that I have been Mayor, I've had the great fortune to work together with Karen in developing my column and other press releases and assorted things.

One of the things that sticks out in my mind is how much Karen loved Pennsauken, like she lived here all her life.

Besides our professional relationship, I'm proud to say that my relationship with Karen has developed into a good friendship for me and my family.

And, like Bill, Karen is leaving the family of Pennsauken to be closer with her family and future endeavors.

So even though this is a great time of year, there is some sadness in my heart because I'm losing two people that were very close to me. But more importantly, I have the honor of calling my friends.

So, I'd like to wish Karen good fortune, good luck and the best of everything you get involved in. Thank you for 8 great years.

In closing, as this is my last column as your Mayor, I want to thank you for your support and ask that you please extend that same support to the new Mayor and new editor.

I hope everyone has a Merry Christmas and Happy New Year.