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2020 A Great Year for Lantana

By Mayor David J. Stewart

As the end of the year approaches, I would like to wish all our residents and businesses Happy Holidays.

Lantana has completed many projects and enhancements in 2020. During the Coronavirus pandemic, Town staff worked with state and county Officials and Orders to facilitate guidelines within our Town. The Coronavirus webpage was created and continuously updated, and staff disseminated information to businesses and residents. Staff participated in daily (7 days/week) Conference Calls with Palm Beach County Officials. The Town implemented numerous safety majors in response to COVID-19. I want to acknowledge and thank all the front-line workers, essential workers and first responders for risking their lives and providing essential services to our community.

Some of the landscape and other improvements made during this past year were upgrading the plantings at the Central Ave. entrance to Lantana Cove, the "Town of Lantana" Highway Exchange signs on Lantana and Hypoluxo Roads, 13th St. Median, Maddock Park, Beach Sign, landscaped five new medians on Dixie Hwy. and re-landscaped the Police Memorial. For our Lyman Kayak Park, we replanted and added solar lighting at the kiosk.

Roads were re-paved throughout Town: Mayfield Rd., Shirley Ct., Southwinds Dr., Sterns St., Siesta St., Silver Sands Ln., Sunrise Ave., W. Hardee St., S. Broadway, W. Pine St., W. Central Blvd./Finlandia, S. Arnold

Ave., Lake View Ave., S. Lakeside Pl., E. Central Blvd., Lagoon Ln., and S. Atlantic Dr. Deteriorating/worn-out sidewalks town-wide were replaced and new sidewalks along 7th Street were installed. Through an Agreement with FPL, we upgraded 538 street lights to energy efficient LED lighting.

The Town is continuing efforts to reduce the flood waters that impacted the residents of the Sea Pines neighborhood during the month of October and early November. Over 12 million gallons of water were pumped and hauled from the Sea Pines area and pumping operations continue. The weir wall on the west side of I-95 was lowered which will help lower the ground water table and enable a faster downstream flow of storm-water from the Sea Pines drainage system. Additional actions are taking place such as: Flushing and cleaning of the catch basins pipes, inlets and manholes; sidewalk and street cleanings, repairs to structures and re-sodding of the swales at certain intersections where wear and tear has occurred.

Lantana's Town events continue to be a success with modifications due to COVID-19. The Library staff and volunteers handed out candy bags to community children that dressed up, and residents drove through lighted tunnels and were provided toys and treats from Santa and his Elves, and Movie Nights at Bicentennial Park, to name a few.

In 2021, Lantana will be celebrating its 100th birthday. To commemorate the Town's centennial, a large event will be held in conjunction with the Town's July 4th Celebration at Bicentennial Park. The event tentatively will feature: Food trucks, a firework show, live music, stilt walkers in vintage costumes, carnival games, a carousel, free fishing lessons and other activities. Free copies of the centennial book "Lantana A Small Fishing Village" will be distributed and there will be an unveiling of a new Public Art structure in Bicentennial Park where it will be permanently displayed.

In furtherance of the Centennial Celebration, 100 trees will be planted in various locations within the town with commemorative numbered tags on them throughout 2021. The Greater Lantana Chamber of Commerce is facilitating the Tree Dedication Project where citizens and small businesses can donate or sponsor a tree. Interested parties may contact the Greater Lantana Chamber of Commerce for more information. New "Welcome to Lantana" entrance signs will also be placed throughout the town.

It has been an honor to serve as your Mayor for the last 20+ years and, in 2021, I will continue the momentum of previous years in striving to make Lantana a great place to live, work and play.

Mayor David J. Stewart

Welcome 2021!

I'm sure most of us revelled in the passing of 2020 this past week. With the shipments of COVID-19 vaccines arriving, there is a light at the end of this crazy tunnel. Additionally, hopes are high for additional stimulus, unemployment benefits resuming, and small business assistance. There is optimism for positive change and progress on the horizon, but it does not erase the months of stress and fatigue, devastation over the deaths of loved ones, money and food insecurities, job and home losses, and more.

While Washington politicians use political parties as shields for their decisions, non-partisan local public servants have to do the real work of providing solutions for its constituents who face

the aftermath of those decisions. Was \$1200 enough money to feed a family, pay bills, rent, mortgages etc. for 9 going on 10 months- Especially if you've lost your job, lost a business, become sick or worse? Last year I remained steadfastly focused on Lake Worth Beach and the needs of our citizens while trying to avoid getting caught up in the drama on the state and federal level. I am now more confident than ever in putting our citizens first above partisan politics. In 2020 we came together as neighbors and friends living in the same City and it will be how we will work through the issues ahead in the coming year. Lake Worth Beach, while a small city, is mighty and I am so proud of the work we've

been able to achieve... TOGETHER!

This can-do attitude is represented in the many kind acts and efforts of our residents, businesses, local agencies, elected officials and City staff who take pride in and care deeply about this community. While there are many examples I want to share with you, here are some of the most significant ones that demonstrate what we are capable of doing here in Lake Worth Beach:

Our City provided more Covid testing sites and food programs per capita during the outbreak than most other cities across the country.

Food insecurity during the economic downturn created by the COVID Pandemic shutdown was, and is, a serious issue for many in our City. Finding

ways to get nutritious food into the hands of our affected residents was a priority. A big thank you to the great food supply organizations like Feeding South Florida, Palm Beach County Food Bank, Buccan Provisions, and Produce Alliance who stepped up and help fill the shelves of the food pantries and provide the produce and grocery supplies for our church-led and community based organizations. They were able to distribute these much needed supplies to the community. Some of these organizations were providing pre-pandemic food support to our most needy. A special thank you goes to the Arms of Hope, led by Patrick Livingston, who operates right across from City's Wimbley Gym.

Other efforts include the work of City leaders such as Vice Mayor Amoroso who works with the Community Redevelopment Agency and Feeding South Florida to coordinate food distribution each Tuesday. He and the many other volunteers also deliver meals supplied by Buccan Provisions/Grato Restaurant to those who are shut in at home. We will continue to provide food each Tuesday starting at 9am at the Hatch, as supplies continue.

Vice Mayor Pro Tem Scott Maxwell also worked to organize a Thanksgiving meal for

families and worked tirelessly with volunteers to make hygiene kits with instructions on how to stay COVID-free in three languages. His efforts continue.

I've been cooking for those in our community that have experienced the loss of loved ones or trauma during these difficult times. I also have helped out by volunteering at all the various food distributions and events. It is important that leaders lead by example not just by words.

The other big issue related to COVID was the issue of testing. Initially, there was a focus on large centralized test sites but as smaller testing sites became possible, Lake Worth Beach was already in line to coordinate locations in our City. I would like to send my sincere gratitude to our County Mayor David Kerner, Commissioner Mack Bernard and Administrator Verdenia Baker for hearing my plea for immediate testing sites in our neighborhoods. In addition to County mobile testing, thank you to Genesis, Caridad, and the many other organizations that run the Lake Worth Beach tests. Thank you to Peniel Haitian Baptist Church for your parking lot to host these sites since May. Thanks to the Guatemala Mayan Center, Compass Community Center and Sacred Heart Church for additional community

outreach in their own languages and with love. It is also important to recognize Palm Beach County Fire Rescue and their assistance with testing.

Going forward, we continue to coordinate closely with our partners at the County regarding vaccines. When we find out the details on the vaccination program for the general populations, we will let you know immediately.

In a normal year, the COVID Pandemic would have qualified as a major event for a year, but it wasn't the only major challenge we faced in 2020. The death of unarmed George Floyd brought to life the injustices and fears that the African American community has had to endure for generations. The deaths of Trayvon Martin, Breonna Taylor, Tamir Rice, Michael Brown, Eric Garner and more, sadly show a system in need of reflection, scrutinizing, repair, and revision. I am proud to share that our local police force, PBSO District 14 and the Palm Beach County Sheriff, enforce the policies and procedures recommended by racial equity groups and are used as best practices nationwide. While I was honored and moved to be the first local Mayor to participate in a candlelight vigil and walk

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Photo Contest Winners Selected

The City received 31 submittals for the 2020 photo contest, 16 of which were viable photo's for enlargement and judging, and the selection committee represented 7 City Departments.

Amrita Rampersad – Youth Programs
Amanda Montero – Human Resources
Ruth Umholtz – Finance
Diana Gonzalez – Fire Rescue
Cheryl McMacken – Building
Samantha Powers – Planning & Engineering
Leslie Noonan – Public Works

The CRS Dept. would like to thank and acknowledge the following employees for their time and effort, with a special thank you to Austin Lee, from

the Administration Dept., and Loris Baez, from CRS, for their time, effort and coordination with this program!

A very special thank you to Blanca Mackrey, owner of the State Farm office on Lake Worth Road, who sponsored the gift cards awarded tonight and also served as a guest judge!

Thank you so much for your involvement and continued community spirit!

Tonight we are recognizing the 3 top scoring submissions:

1st Place – Helen Beiriger = \$100

2nd Place – John Singer = \$75

3rd Place – Julian Osorio Rodriguez = \$50