

Mayor's July Fourth Message 2021

Every year July 4th tests the will of the American People—are we truly living the life of a patriot? It is easy to enjoy the extraordinary exhibition of the parade on the Fourth of July, but are we patriots? Are we patriotic in our daily lives? Does a wave of emotion engulf us as we see the red, white, and blue of the American Flags displayed on Howe Street or hanging from the top of our Southport Ladder Truck in front of the Fire Station? Do our hearts skip a beat as we walk by the homes and businesses adorned with bunting? And has the Garrison on Fort Johnston ever looked so glorious as it does right now, embroidered with red, white, and blue—columns, windows, and balcony—with planters growing dozens of small flags on each side of the porch waving gently in the salubrious breeze.

I want to thank the First Lady, Tish Hatem, and the members of the Southport Garden Club for this patriotic project and I especially appreciate Public Services Director Tom Stanley and his department

for their assistance in helping to proclaim the Spirit of July 4th and the Spirit of Freedom that permeates throughout our city and our citizens.

This spirit is not just one day—it continues throughout the year! A Southport Patriot can be defined as one who: Votes; Volunteers, Vaccinated; Verbal and Non-Violent; Venerates the Flag and the Ideals of Freedom and Liberty; Virtuous—the love and loyalty to our country and to each other—our family, neighbors, and friends; Valor is the way in which we live our lives; Victorious over any and all who threaten our Democracy.

We cherish our Freedoms and the Liberty to live the life of a Southport Patriot. Our parade will return—our Patriotic Duty and Love of God and Country—never left.

Joseph P. Hatem, MD, MPH

Mayor City of Southport