

Thanksgiving 2012

Community Comment
November 23, 2012
Sam Pennisi

I hope you all had a wonderful Thanksgiving. It's always been a bit of a mystery to me that this is one of the busiest travel periods of the year. I think it's great that families try so hard to be together for this very American holiday, but as families have been so free to move all over the place, it just seems too hard to travel long distances in such a short period of time. We set ourselves up for disappointment and frustration. Planes fly at the discretion of the weather. If you've noticed lately, the weather can be fickle at best. Travel by car isn't a lot better. I know we are lucky in this regard; both our girls are here and so are our grandchildren.

Thanksgiving has always been about my favorite holiday. There is a great tradition of basic harvest food. No gifts are exchanged. There is no religious conflict. Fall weather is my favorite and I like a little football on television and for a little exercise after a perfect dinner. It's also one day. The only cloud over Thanksgiving comes from my teen years. My family, all of America, and much of the world spent the Thanksgiving weekend of 1963 watching the televised funeral of our assassinated President. I don't think that this country has been so together since that day. For a time, it seemed we could relate to the emotional ride of our ancestors who suffered the death of President Lincoln. Like those Americans, we grieved for a life that was important to us. Lincoln saved the Union and ended slavery. Kennedy brought new life and a new generation to the Whitehouse. He created the Peace Corps and probably saved us, and the world, from a nuclear war. Both men were just men, faults and all. The violent death of both these President ripped our hearts out but highlighted one of the greatest attributes of our government; the peaceful and orderly transition of power. As a teenager in high school, we heard no conversation or question of what would become of our government. We all knew what should happen and, along with the rest of the world, watched it happen before the news cameras live on our televisions. We witnessed one of the greatest aspects of this government of, for, and by the people; stability. We grieved as a nation and buried a political leader. But our country didn't miss a beat. This was important for us to see as citizens and, perhaps more critically, for the world to see. This was a dangerous time for this country of ours. We demonstrated the strength of this democracy for the world to witness.

At that moment in time I could not imagine the turmoil our country would go through with two other prominent deaths later in the same decade. The sixties was an interesting time to live through as a young man. There was plenty of conflict as we argued about a war and about civil rights. I've always been thankful the sixties ended on a high note with the successful landing of a man on the moon, an American man, and getting the three of them home alive and well.

It's black Friday so shop if you can afford to. Until we figure out a better way, we are a consumer driven economy. But especially support small business Saturday. This supports our local business and our local economy even more.

Have a great holiday season and be safe the rest of this weekend

This has been Sam Pennisi for community comment. We are all in this together.