

## **MAYOR'S MESSAGE – REMEMBERING**

All of us have major events in our personal lives that we remember. Events where you embark on major changes. Marriage. Divorce. Birth of your children. Death of close friends or relatives. Maybe even a new job. These are personal things.

In the history of the United States, there are few seminal events. Events where you can ask anyone who was alive at the time, and they can tell you where they were when...happened. Where were you when you heard about...

the attack on Pearl Harbor?  
WWII ending?  
landing on the moon?  
the COVID shutdown?

FDR dying?  
President Kennedy's assassination?  
the towers falling on 9/11?

For me, the answers are...I was in a dress shop with my mother and only a few months old when Kennedy was shot. I obviously have no memories of this, just what my mom told me. Like almost everyone else, I was in front of a TV when Wapakoneta, Ohio native Neil Armstrong took the first steps on the moon. I was amazed!

I was at work when the first tower fell and watching TV as the second tower fell. I was filled with incredible anger and a sense of...how can I help? And like many, I was home when COVID shut down the nation. My feeling was how do we overcome this?

As I write this message, I am reflecting on the fact that it has been nearly 24 years since 9/11. To remember that terrible day, I will be gathering with first responders and many others at Sylvania's 9/11 First Responders Memorial located in Toledo Memorial Park. All are invited. The event starts at 9:00AM. The memorial is located towards the north side of TMP. Please join us.

September 11th is a seminal moment in our nation's history. But for the family and friends of the two thousand nine hundred seventy-seven victims in New York City, Washington DC and Shanksville, Pennsylvania, 9/11 is deeply personal and painful. They remember it as the day they lost their mom, dad, grandpa, grandma, brother, sister, or close friend.

That day first responders did what they always do...they leapt into action. Running up the stairs when others were running down, trying desperately to save more people. Regular citizens helped in any way they could. Each in their own way. Over five hundred thousand people donated blood. More than a quarter of a million people volunteered for military service in the following year. Far beyond any year since the end of the draft. Many of those who volunteered shed their blood, sweat and tears in the War on Terror. Too many gave their all.

On this September 11<sup>th</sup>, let us all remember the victims of that day, the amazing first responders and the spirit of togetherness which pervaded our nation and which only comes through shared tragedy and pain. Do you remember where you were?

As always, if you have something else you want to share with me or if you have a question on other City services, please contact my office at 419-885-8926 or [lsmith@cityofsylvania.com](mailto:lsmith@cityofsylvania.com).