

Fourth of July, 2023 Remarks
Mayor Thaddeus Kobylarz

Greetings. It is terrific to see all of you here this morning, on this (hopefully) sunny Fourth of July, in the unquestionably best town in this, the great state of New Jersey. I'd like to thank the Chatham Borough Volunteer Fire Department Association for once again hosting today's annual parade and fireworks. I'd also like to thank the Parade Chairman, Corey Duren, along with his team, for all of their hard work in putting this (always) highly anticipated event together. And I wish to salute George Sweetin on his selection as the 2023 Parade Grand Marshal, a much-deserved choice given his tireless effort as Chairman of the Fire Department's 125th Anniversary Committee.

Speaking of which, I especially want to congratulate the Chatham Borough Volunteer Fire Department on its 125th Anniversary this year – a truly remarkable milestone. For well over a century now, your members have dedicated their lives to keeping every Chatham resident and business safe from harm. For this, you have earned the eternal respect, gratitude, and admiration of generations of Chatham residents. Thank you all so very much for all that you do.

The Fourth of July means many things to us. It is, of course, about celebrating the birth of this great nation. And it is equally about spending time with family and friends.

But from my vantage point, as your mayor, who watched and prayed as each of you, our volunteer First-Responders, demonstrated your exemplary courage day in and day out during those very uncertain early months of the Covid-19 global pandemic, before we had a vaccine, and at a time when we had very little knowledge of just how virulent, or lethal, the coronavirus might really be, the Fourth of July has become, for me at least, a day in which we are called to recognize, and celebrate, the many heroes among us, namely each and every one of you who are assembled here today.

In my eyes, you, our volunteer Firefighters, and you as well, our volunteer Emergency Squad Members, exemplify the very meaning of "courage," "sacrifice," and "dedication," in all that you do.

For I have seen up close, how, in the event of an emergency, while others may flee, you instead run *towards* the danger, bravely, resolutely, with the conviction to serve, regardless of any personal risk you might face.

We, the residents of Chatham Borough, are extremely fortunate to have you among us. You personify all that is good and noble about this wonderful community of ours. And we are forever grateful to each and every one of you for your untiring effort, your deep sense of mission, and your personal sacrifice.

So much so, in fact, that I'd like now to thank each and every one of you publicly, and personally, as I did back on May 6th during the Fire Department's 125th Anniversary Celebration.

Hence, to each of the following active Firefighters, Chatham Borough says "thank you": Balcom Parcells; Jack Conlan; Joe Marts; Deane Elmlad; Jimmy Kling; Charles Salin; Don Kidd; Doug Allan; John Duane; Pete Glogolich; Sam Sealy; Steve Williams; John Baldwin; Paul Carroll Sr.; George Sweetin; Hugh Ames; Bob Sweetin; Pete Heimrich; Dan Casey; Dan Smith; Pete Connor; Phil Salinardi; Jeff Fricke; James Favata; Kevin Weichert; George Traver; Ian Horowitz; Don Almgren; Dave Allan; Dan McGookin; Tim Weichert; Tim Carey; Matt Pridham; Corey Duren; AJ Sweetin; Paul Carrol Jr.; John Rickershauser; Colin Kidd; Shell Lee; Rob Kelly; Hunter Novello; Tyler Kidd; Keith Makar; Dave Bruen; Julian Moszczynski (Probationary); Ella Scannell (Probationary); and Anne-Marie Lord (Junior).

And to each of the following Emergency Squad Members, Chatham Borough says "thank you" as well: Evan Skinner; Nicole DiMaggio; Roberta Bitar; Sam Cooperman; Steve Davenport; Christine Grobert; Joanne Howden; Jim Martin; Bryan McGookin; Jeff Stanton; Craig Alperowitz; Molly Alperowitz; Hailey Baumgardner; Aiden Bernstein; Ellen Blazoski; Jamie Boles; Tom Boyle; Jorah Burns; Tim Caggiano; Janice Camelotto; Shannon Carey; Jon Carlsson; Caitlin Colabraro; Bill Cody; Leach Costa; Rich Crater; Henry Davenport; Peanut Edmonson; Rob Eisenhardt; Dan Farkas; Dayo Fayanju; Barbara Fertakos; Kylie Finklestein; Kathryn Foley; Celeste Fondaco; George Fricke; Sam Francis; Sophia Gagliardi; John Grobert; Marcelino Guerrero; Carol Grant; Marshall Hayes; Robin Hoppe; Joana Hosta Gelpi; Todd Huffman; Sally Giordano; Mark Javello; Brenda Koehler; Joe Korkuch; Mike Lemons; Tom LeRoux; Danielle Lugbauer; Abigail Maddi; Bennett Marshall; Kavita Matthew; Kara McCaffrey; Jerry Medina; Mikayla Meyler; Sarah Meyler; Bill Mueller; Richard Nelson; Sarah Nelson; Oliver Neumann-Loreck; Marie Noel; Sue Novak; Katie O'Malley; Matt Palmer; Jeet Parekh; Kumar Paul; Maddi Perez; Jim Pinaire; Ishir Rao; Divyanshi Rath; Ryan Readlinger; Ian Reardon; Jill Rees; Alice Rice; Ivan Rozhkov; Yevgeniy Rozhkov; Amina Seth; Ken Sham; Claire Silverstein; Amelie Srinivas; Caitlin Sweeney; Mary Kate Vowells; Cathy Warbrick; Peter Warbrick; Roma Welsh; Carole Wilmot; Bill Wolsch; and Xu Xiaoxiao.

Finally, I'd also like to offer my profuse thanks, on behalf of all of Chatham, to the *families* of our brave Firefighters and EMS Members, that is, to the wives, the husbands, the children, the parents, and the siblings of our beloved First Responders, for their own very special sacrifice, patience, understanding, and love.

Okay, that was a whole lot of names. But I do hope each and every one of you feels the whole lot of love coming from your fellow residents today.

With that said, go forth and enjoy this Independence Day holiday in this, the very best town in the tremendously great state of New Jersey. Be well! Have a blast! And God bless you all!