As we bid farewell to 2018 and look forward to greeting the new year, it’s a good time for reflection.

We are in the midst of another outstanding year in Pigeon Forge. We have welcomed more quality businesses to town and seen more and more visitors choosing Pigeon Forge as their destination of choice. At the same time, we anxiously await new developments, including a major addition to Dollywood, as well as new entertainment in the coming year.

The LeConte Center in Pigeon Forge celebrated its first five years. The Center has played a major role in bringing thousands of new visitors to town, visitors that will certainly become repeat visitors, thanks to the warm welcome they receive in Pigeon Forge.

Tourism is what keeps Pigeon Forge alive and prospering. We truly believe everyone living here is part of the tourism industry, because your welcoming spirit keeps our visitors coming back time after time and contributing to the city’s revenue. We have heard from hundreds of people that one of the reasons they choose to come to Pigeon Forge is that they feel like they’re coming home, like they’re visiting family and neighbors.

The City Commissioners are proud to represent the residents of Pigeon Forge. Please remember that we are here to serve you and welcome the opportunity to talk with you about our fine city.

Blessings to each of you this Christmas season and best wishes for a happy and bountiful New Year.
While winter in the Smokies is beautiful, the weather and the need to heat our homes can bring safety issues to Pigeon Forge residents. Here are some tips to stay safe this season.

**HEATING YOUR HOME**
- Keep anything that can burn at least three feet from heating equipment (furnace, fireplace, wood stove or portable space heater).
- Have a three-foot “kid-free zone” around open fires and space heaters.
- Never use your kitchen stove to heat your home.
- Make sure the fireplace has a sturdy screen to stop sparks from flying into the room; ashes should be cool before putting them in a metal container and keep that container a safe distance from your home.
- Test smoke alarms at least once a month. If you need smoke alarms for your home call the fire department. We will come to your house and install them for you at no cost.

**WINTER STORM SAFETY**
- In case of an emergency, plan two ways out of the home; clear the driveway and front walk of ice and snow to provide easy access to your home.
- Make sure your house number can be seen from the street, so emergency personnel can find you if you need help.
- Be prepared for power outages with flashlights, battery-powered lighting and fresh batteries; never use candles to provide light.
- Stay aware of winter weather forecasts by listening to television or radio for updates or watch for bulletins online.
- Turn portable heaters off when you leave the room and when you go to bed. Electric space heaters are a major cause of house fires.

Many Pigeon Forge residents, as well as our guests, enjoy our city-sponsored special events. We want to take this opportunity to congratulate the Pigeon Forge Department of Tourism Office of Special Events on having an award-winning year and receiving nearly two dozen trophies from the International Festival and Events Association.

Driving along the Pigeon Forge Parkway today, you’ll find that our town is filled with entertainment ... music theaters, magic and comedy shows, dinner theaters and more. The first musical show in Pigeon Forge was “Bonnie Lou and Buster’s Smoky Mountain Hayride.” The Smoky Mountain Hayride opened at the Coliseum in 1972 and ran until Bonnie Lou and Buster retired in 1994. The popular show featured bluegrass and gospel music, clogging and comedy. It was located near present-day traffic light #4.