

OPEN LETTER

On areas of concerns raised by the public and officials in the parade, the leaders of the five traditional Mummers Divisions issue the following statement:

We, the Presidents of the five traditional Mummers Divisions, categorically reject expressions of hate and bigotry. Negative behavior and expression have no place in a parade that celebrates family, working people and the hopes for the New Year, particularly in a parade that has come to represent the City of Philadelphia.

We hope that people realize that the vast majority of thousands of Mummers strive to put forth entertaining and family-oriented productions. The few who violated the spirit of the community do not represent the majority. However, even a handful is too many. Therefore, we will continue to educate and to promote inclusivity and cultural awareness.

To those ends, we pledge to take the following steps in addition to the discussions and steps taken in recent years:

1. We make clear that we vocally condemn any expressions of hate.
2. We pledge full cooperation with legal or government authorities looking into these areas of concern.
3. On the matter of the Mummer Comic tradition of satire and poking fun at pop culture, we will continue dialogue with Mummers about sensitivity and with non-Mummers about the Mummer tradition of humor and what can be accepted as freedom of expression and what is over the line.
4. We commit to educate and embrace inclusivity.
5. For any ethnic theme performed by a club, it will be required that the club includes advisors and/or participants members of that ethnicity to guarantee respect.
6. We establish "Love the Mummers-Love the City" as a conduit for the education of Mummers and non-Mummers and to bring the city closer together through inclusion in the parade of people from all walks of life and neighborhoods.
7. We will continue dialogue with community representatives and the City of Philadelphia and are beginning new discussions on issues of awareness, sensitivity, community standards and inclusion.

Signed:

George Badey, Chair, Love The Mummers

Tom Loomis, President, String Band Association

Rich Porco, President, Comic Division

Robert Shannon, Jr., President, Philadelphia Mummers Association

Charlie McKenna, President, Wench Brigade Division

Jack Cohen, President, Fancy Division

Jim Bradley, President, Fancy Brigade Association

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