Hello everyone! It has been a while since my last letter, and I truly hope that this letter finds everyone safe and healthy.

I am not going to rehash the details of the last five months to our residents, but we all know what has been happening, where we have been, and where we are now, however, we need to know where we are going. We need to know if there is a light at the end of the tunnel and how long will it be until it is reached. Depending on who you talk to, answers will vary, but I believe there is a light at the end of this tunnel, and we are getting closer, although it is going to still take a few more months to see it. We are still in Stage 2 for the State of New Jersey and it looks like we will stay in Stage 2 throughout October.

The City of Garfield passed an ordinance to have outdoor dining, and it looks like it's been a huge success for our restaurants that took advantage of this ordinance. Please continue to support our small businesses and help our community thrive. Unfortunately, the City of Garfield and the Events Committee had to cancel all summer and fall events through October.

This September you will not see students shuffling to school with their backpacks and newly pressed uniforms.

The Garfield School District Restart Committee had to make a tough decision for the safety of our students and our faculty. It has decided to begin the 2020 school year by going fully remote. No matter how you feel about the decision, let me assure you, this decision wasn't easy, and it was very emotional for our committee. One main reason was the great possibility of one of our students or faculty members contracting the virus in school and transmitting it to a family member or friend who could lose a fatal battle with the virus. Let's just say that's not something we wish on anyone.

I want to congratulate and thank local volunteer groups "Strangers Helping Strangers" and "Garfield Good Neighbors" as they continue to volunteer and feed our residents on a daily basis for FREE, along with Tara Campistrous and the Garfield YMCA and the Garfield Community Police, run by Sergeant Jeff Stewart. I'm proud to let our residents know, that between being a part of Strangers Helping Strangers and feeding the seniors daily, we are closing in on 75,000 meals given out since March.
Finally, I am especially grateful for our city employees. In spite of adversity and difficult circumstances due to COVID-19, they have accepted the challenges to adapt and rise to the occasion. My hope is that we all remain resilient, encouraged, and Garfield Strong!!

Richard "Riggs" Rigoglioso  
Mayor

P.S.
City Hall is in the process of being set up for CDC compliance on screening and protecting employees and visitors. So, it is still closed to the public until further notice. Services are available via telephone and online. There is a mailbox to drop off any payments.